

Youth, Revolt, Recognition

The Young Generation during and after the “Arab Spring”

Edited by Isabel Schäfer



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Introduction

Despite the decisive role and active participation of the young generation in the uprisings in North Africa and the Middle East, and in particular in those countries, where the old regimes were overthrown (Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya), it remains underrepresented in the new political (dis)orders, political institutions, political parties and decision-making processes of these countries. In other countries in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean (e.g. in Morocco, Algeria and Jordan) young people do not feel sufficiently represented or recognised either and opportunities for political participation often remain limited. At the same time, the future and the perspectives of this young generation will be decisive for the future of the on-going transition processes in the Middle East and North African (MENA) region. Youth unemployment in the MENA countries oscillates between 20% and 35%, in some regions it has reached 40% - and the labour markets are unable to absorb the high numbers of young job seekers. Although this is a highly skilled generation, with many possessing an academic education and university degrees, their qualifications are often not adapted to the needs and challenges of the rapidly changing labour markets and globalized economies (e.g. in terms of technology and innovation), be it in the public or in the private sector. In addition to the political and demographic challenges, and the difficulties in integrating into the labour markets, this young generation faces numerous further obstacles within society.

The objective of this edited volume is to analyse - from a political science, interdisciplinary and comparative perspective - old and new forms of political participation, mobilization and protest, as well as the challenges currently facing young people in the political and social systems in different Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries. Case studies from Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Turkey will present the regional and transnational character of these protest movements. Many of the young “revolutionaries” have since retreated from politics, dissatisfied at the developments that followed the “revolutions” of 2011. But this does not mean that they are apolitical or disinterested in politics and society. They are looking for other places, other forms and means to express their displeasure over inequality, injustice, the lack of professional opportunities and the resulting lack of prospects in their private lives (*waithood*): Be it in social movements, civil society organisations and initiatives, in street art and culture, or on the internet. Be it in personal retreat, drug consumption, increasing religious fervour, quietist (moderate) Salafism, or, in extreme cases, radical Salafism (e.g. jihadi fighter in Syria). Others in turn, who do not see a future for themselves in their own countries, are waiting, bored, for a better life elsewhere and are literally leaning against the walls (*hittistes*), or they decide to emigrate (*harraga*). Limited mobility and restrictive migration policies rather increase the desire for freedom and mobility. Here, the frustration of an entire generation at the unattainability of alternative paths of life, or the freedom to move to other places becomes visible – including the related dreams, projections, imaginations and physical dangers of migration.

The “Arab Spring” of 2011 raised many hopes for a generational change, a replacement of old entrenched power structures, for a fundamental transformation and change of political structures, and even for a social revolution, opening up new opportunities and alternatives for the young generation. Since the Arab Spring, pessimists and neoconservatives have been trying to minimise or

negate the strong potential of the 2011 revolts. The political situation in the different Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries has developed very differently since then: in Libya and Syria civil wars have broken out, in Egypt an authoritarian backlash has taken place, in Tunisia, a more or less peaceful and democratic transition process brought 88-year-old president Beji Caid Essebsi to power. However, the frustration and protest potential of the young generation continues to exist. However, within the societies of the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean region, the ruptures, frictions and conflicts between generations are very diverse and multifaceted. This publication approaches the youth and revolt phenomenon in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean area from different angles and looks for answers to the overarching questions: Where have the young “revolutionaries” of 2011 gone? Were all their hopes for change, justice, social equality and freedom deceived or has something changed for the positive after all? Does the great international visibility in 2011 of young people in the streets, on social media and in the civil society sector contrast with little political participation and representation? Which ways out and what kind of means of expression do young people look for, in order to vent their anger and displeasure? The different contributions provide some insights into the current situation of the young generation in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries during and after “the Arab Spring”, by approaching these issues from different thematic perspectives, including qualitative case studies, partially based on field research on the ground.

In Part I, *Valeska Henze* provides a theoretical overview of the notion of youth (in general) - a contested analytical category in social sciences. The contribution gives indications which are also valuable for the analysis of youth in a North African or Middle Eastern context, for instance with regard to the mechanisms of normative expectations of society on youth, the attribution of the “hero” role, youth as a necessary component in the social system, and the structural and institutional restrictions in the integration process of youth into adult society. In this publication “youth” is, of course, not understood as a monolithic bloc or homogenous unit, but rather as a process, as a phase of transition between childhood and adulthood, as many forms of youth with many faces and facets. This is within the context of Asaf Bayat’s concept of “youthfulness”, which means a disposition of attitudes, behaviour and knowledge that are associated with “being young”. Each article in this publication approaches “youth” and its meaning from a different theoretical angle, but they all share the common objective to explore „what it means to be young“ in different societal contexts today around the Mediterranean sea, in particular in the context of the uprisings of 2011 and after.

Part II focuses on the political dimension. *Carolina Silveira* considers youth in its role as political actor in Tunisia, analyses questions of political participation in the Tunisian transition process, and the underrepresentation of “young revolutionaries” in the newly founded political parties and in the wider political landscape. *Anna Lührmann* looks at the situation of the young generation in the upheavals in Libya, under the aspects of youth political participation, forms of mobilization, self organisation and continued exclusion from the newly established political structures, which were already dissolved again in 2014. *Charlotte Biegler-König* asks whether or why political Islam represents an alternative political society and way of life for young people in search for their identities. By analysing examples from the Egyptian and Tunisian transition processes, her contribution examines the causes of the new wave of religiosity among young people, and the

attractiveness of Islamist parties or Salafist groupings for young people. *Daniel Farell* explores the role of art in the protest movements in the context of the Egyptian revolution. Hereby he looks in particular at street art, artistic protest actions, and the use of artistic creativity for political activism as well as the emergence of new forms of expression. *Gözde Böcu* considers the protest movement in Turkey and the role of the “Gezi-Generation”. Situated in the Eastern Mediterranean, Turkey is directly concerned by the developments in the neighbouring Arab states, as the current Syria-Iraq-IS conflict shows. The political constellation in Turkey differs from the situations in the neighbouring states, marked by uprisings, civil wars or failing state structures. But the forms and objectives of the protests, or the slogans and means of the young generation render visible certain parallels. The protests of the Gezi Generation were part of a larger transnational protest dynamic, which started in Tunisia in 2011, and flamed up later on in different places around the Mediterranean Sea.

In Part III, which focuses on the socio-economic dimension, in terms of migration and unemployment, *Inken Bartels* analyses changes in the migration politics of Tunisia after the Tunisian revolution. Emigration is a sort of outlet for many young people who see few prospects in their own countries and who dream of a better life in Europe. In parallel to the increasing emigration from the country itself, Tunisia faces increasing immigration pressures, especially from Libya since 2011, but also by continued transit migration from Sub-Saharan Africa. Outside of the governmental migration policies, civil society organisations and actors are increasingly committed in this sector - some of these organisations or initiatives have been founded by young activists. *Bachir Hamdouch* explores recent changes in the situation of migration in Morocco, and observes three major tendencies: a decrease in Moroccan emigration towards Europe, increasing return migration towards Morocco (especially by highly skilled young graduates), and increasing immigration to Morocco from Sub-Saharan Africa. These developments have also had an impact on the changing profiles of Moroccan emigrants, including an increasing proportion of (young) female migrants and higher education levels. Emigration remains an important economic and social alternative option for young people in Morocco; Moroccan migration policies are currently being redefined. *Wai Mun Hong* addresses the difficulties faced by young people in accessing and integrating into the MENA labour markets. Her statistical analysis of youth unemployment, youth labour force, demography, human development and educational systems problematizes the current challenges and obstacles of the young generation, in particular of young educated graduates.

The different contributions to this publication that all express the personal opinions of the authors show how relevant the issue of youth in the Mediterranean area remains. Discontent and protest potential still exists in many countries in North Africa and in the Middle East. How this protest potential will develop is open, and will depend on different social, economic and political factors, as well as on the upcoming decisions made by the old and new political classes. The causes for the perceived and real inequality, injustice and exclusion of youth in the MENA region are multiple and diverse and need further social science analysis.

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Berlin, March 2015

Isabel Schäfer

Part I – Theoretical Perspectives

On the Concept of Youth – Some Reflections on Theory

Valeska Henze

Introduction

Youth, in a very general definition, is a period of life in-between childhood and adulthood. It is described as a time of experimenting with roles and identities, still void of the burden of social norms and obligations, yet slowly preparing the youngsters for their lives as full members of the social collective. During this process of social integration young people find themselves in a complex social system, composed of such elements as tradition, history, social demands, hopes, and individual future prospects, all of which they have to incorporate into a coherent picture in order to build a proper foundation for their personal life. Step by step they have to obtain new social roles and extend their range of social performances. This passage into society is guided by various socially defined norms and demands that serve the reproductional functions of society while conditions of economic and social integration set the framework for the political socialisation of the future citizens.

What do these implications of growing up mean for the young and for society? The following contribution surveys shortly different conceptualisations of youth and how they relate to requirements of society and its future. Theoretical considerations on the notion of youth shall help to understand why youth is rebellious, unsatisfied etc., as their acting always is a response to their own experiences with social realities and to expectations society imposes on their young generations.¹

Youth as we speak of today is a product of modernity. It developed as a middle class project during industrialisation, hence at a time when social orders were shaken by fast and confusing transitions.² Youth since has become an object of pedagogical and psychological expertise. Youth is conceptualised in two ways: as a stage model of individual development on the one hand, and as an element of social integration processes on the other hand. One usually can detect aspects of one and the other to varying extent in different concepts of youth. Thus the modern image of youth integrates elements of a pedagogic view of youth as a shapeable object, with the demand for an unproblematic integration into adult society. Pedagogy and education shall direct the individual through a process of cultural and civic maturation, which complements the biological development of a human being, as it were a natural way of growing up with culturally given implications and objectives that will result in a valuable, civilised person. This implicates a clear normative understanding of the way youth should develop. To the contrary the mainstream sociological views set out from the goal of social stability, to which youth, as all social groups, has to contribute. In this perspective youth is a functional item of the social structure.

¹ For a detailed elaboration please see Henze, Valeska (2014): *Improving Future(s). Youth Imagery as Representations of the Political Cultures in Sweden and Poland*. Berlin: Berliner Wissenschafts-Verlag (Nordeuropäische Studien 25).

² An often quoted statement by Frank Musgrove parallels the invention of the steam engine in 1765 with the 'discovery' of youth by Jean Jacques Rousseau in 1762 with the publication of *Émile*, in: Musgrove, Frank (1998): *Youth and the social order*. London: Routledge (The international library of sociology, 12), p. 33.

Modern youth adopts an own status and captures an own social room with claims, such as to live their newly acclaimed energies and possibilities, and test different social roles without immediately being confronted with the heavy weight of adult life and regulations. Although these new evolving demands and hopes are connected to the ideas of general freedom and renewal, which still contain plenty references to the ideals of a romanticised youth as for instance in Rousseau's works on education³, the overall goal of youthful freedom remains directed by existing social structures. The family as centre of one's life conduct and its guiding patriarchal principles have been replaced by a juvenile principle, which was articulated through the idolisation of assumed youthful attributes.⁴ The juvenile principle corresponded perfectly to the dynamics of modernisation and could be applied to the societal development goals of modernity. Youth, hence, ended up in the middle of a highly ambivalent process oscillating between conservative claims of preservation and moderation and the radical demands of (leftist) revolutionist ideas: The youthful power of renewal was either needed in a fight against society or for the protection of society as well as for expansive plans of imperialistic states. In contrast to the romanticist world of a Rousseauian youth the centre of attention switched from the beauty of a youthful and innocent mind to the physical strength that will advance into a new and accelerated time. In doing so youth and its attributions, its expectable, shapeable and projectable prefixes for the future of society more and more became objectified by scientific methods.

Societal standardisation of youth

By the beginning of the 20th century the youth age had evolved as a general societal norm which was dominated by the bourgeois ideals of juvenility, to which other social classes had to adapt to. Nonetheless the fundamentals of conceptualising youth never could abandon its romanticist roots entirely. The norm was set by psychological and pedagogical efforts to define stages of personal development, assign age cohorts to social groups⁵ and ascribe so called tasks of development.⁶ Tasks of development structure individual biographies along socially defined transitions and determine temporary, sequenced life-stages. This grouping of personal and social lives shall for instance assure social stability at the critical point of generational transition. The complete range of developmental tasks thus structure the whole life. Yet, the concept intermingles descriptive and normative elements, so that the process is more or less designated and its results can be 'anticipated' or even demanded. During the years developmental tasks, especially those for adolescence, have been adjusted to the furthermore changing social structures by shifting or expanding the stages on a time

³ Rousseau, Jean-Jacques (1993): *Emile oder über die Erziehung*. Paderborn: Schöningh.

⁴ Such as rejuvenation, renewal, energy, creativity, enthusiasm, to some extent also rebellious attitudes. Cf. Gillis, John R. (1974): *Youth and History. Tradition and Change in European Age Relations 1770 - Present*. New York, London: Academic Press. pp. 113, who comprehensively develops the concept of youth from a socio-historical point of view. He describes a complex process, in which he explicitly accounts for the role of more or less organised youth groups as well as he recognises the implications of social class. Nonetheless the dominating modern view of youth stems from mainly bourgeois circles.

⁵ See especially Erikson, Erik H. (1989): *Identität und Lebenszyklus. Drei Aufsätze*. 11. Aufl. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp (Suhrkamp-Taschenbuch Wissenschaft, 16) and G. Stanely Hall (1904): *Adolescence; its psychology and its relations to physiology, anthropology, sociology, sex, crime, religion and education*. New York: D. Appleton and Company.

⁶ A concept elaborated by Robert Havighurst, who defines developmental tasks as "tasks which if fulfilled during an individual stage of life will lead to happiness and success with upcoming tasks, while if failed will make the individual unhappy and cause social disapproval and difficulties with the upcoming tasks." Havighurst quoted in: Abels, Heinz (1993): *Jugend vor der Moderne. Soziologische und psychologische Theorien des 20. Jahrhunderts*. Opladen: Leske + Budrich, p. 259. Developmental tasks were thus not specifically related to the youth age. Yet, the developmental tasks of youth have been in the centre of attention more than any other tasks.

scale, which resulted in the prolongation of the period of youth. Nonetheless their substantial claims – leaving the parents, choosing a profession, developing a gender role and living in a relationship with a partner – remained the same, together with the overall goal: securing social stability through a smooth integration into society. The completion of the adolescent development tasks designates a clear break in both the individual and the social life, as social status becomes the main structural feature for people and society, while age had been the primary criterion during childhood and adolescence.⁷ Youth has thus become a subject of social responsibility and protection. It had to be taken care of, advised against the dangers of youthful freedom while at the same time its valuable and idolised qualities have to be fostered. The endeavours of the academic world resulted in a standard of youth who allowed for progress as well as for the preservation of traditions, with more emphasis on one or the other depending on the ideological background. Concepts of youth that among others were reproduced in ideas of education and socialisation therefore developed as structures of social control.⁸

The romanticised youth as a bodily creature, that once was instinctively acting, displaying soulful attitudes and carrying the morals of innocence and purity has been turned into an object of measurable personal and social qualities, which could be optimised by the right treatment, i.e. education. Although all this is put into a rhetoric of youthful freedom – own spaces, moratorium and the like – the clearly set goals of development broke down life into certain, ex-ante scientifically defined stages which imply an adjustment to the ruling habits, attitudes, modes of action and traditions. Thus the clear order of life-stages structured the social processes of hierarchisation and generational transition as well as they replaced the traditional rites of passage and forms of transferring authority.⁹ Contradictions and ambivalences of modernisation are to be overcome by standardising and objectifying the social category age, by turning youth into a social status and a set of social roles.

Adopting roles in present time

Social roles link a personal development directly to social institutions which take over tasks of socialisation and influence the shaping of adult roles. Assigned roles are the functional playground on which society and individual intersect, as they attach modes of action to corresponding (sub-) systems, i.e. social spaces and times.¹⁰ Moreover roles are ordering elements of the social structure, for they are generally expressing certain normative expectations of society. These expectations in turn are derived from their desired functional contribution to the social system. Hence, social

⁷ The social definition of a person in childhood is e.g. “8-year old pupil” and for an adult “full-time worker at the car factory”.

⁸ “The invention of the developmental and ‘spatial moratorium’ of youth implies the invention of a structure of social control for socialisation processes, in which relief and freedom are paid back with a continuous and effective social control. This social control is organised of professional supervisors and mirrors the structure of social inequality, as it is focused on middle class perspectives. It aims at learning and maintaining individual self-control mechanisms within the framework, that is given by the dominant, bureaucratic-rational organisation of society.” Trotha, Trutz von (1982): Zur Entstehung von Jugend. In: Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie (KZfSS) 34 (3), p. 269, who asserts a turn in the social organisation of age during the 19th century which distinguished itself from the time before through among others the fact that dependence now was shaped by pedagogic and psychological concepts, youth got excluded from the social realm of work, the introduction of age limits for certain stages of development and education.

⁹ Cf. Erdheim, Mario (1982): Die gesellschaftliche Produktion von Unbewußtheit. Eine Einführung in den ethnopschoanalytischen Prozess. Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp; cf especially chapter 4, pp.284-295.

¹⁰ Both, time and space have got rid of their ‘natural’ or biological measures since the enlightenment. Koselleck speaks of a “denaturalisation” of geographical rooms and biological time courses, cf. Koselleck, Reinhart (2003): Zeitschichten. Studien zur Historik. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp (Suhrkamp-Taschenbuch Wissenschaft, 1656), pp. 78.

relations and social interaction become part of normative role models, which define rules of social selection and hierarchy and become necessary conditions for social stability. The role-model concept fits perfectly well to the structural functionalist approach,¹¹ which for a long time dominated the sociological perspective on youth and their integration into society. Samuel Eisenstadt has been one of the structural functionalist sociologists who introduced age as a functional category of the social system and assigned youth a specific position within the social order, by linking age to role expectations and by that to specific social tasks. Age thus has become one necessary feature to hold together the differentiated social systems and to assure the structural continuation of the system, i.e. society.

Eisenstadt views youth as a necessary component within in the social system. He focuses on the emergence of distinct youth groups which take over parts of the socialisation process from the traditional institutions family and school – the peer-groups. Yet, also Eisenstadt defines age culturally by ascribing specific expectations:

[The biological process] serves as basis for the specification of the people, for the development of their mutual relations and activities and for the differentiation along social roles. Although the meaning of age as well as the span of years, that form a relative consistent category or stage of age, vary in each society, we do not know of any society that does not at all differentiate between distinct 'life-ages' and defines them according to norms and values of their cultural tradition. In each society a number of cultural definitions that ascribe certain fundamental characteristics to each age group – or more technically said life-stage – are modelled after basic and general biological facts.¹²

Those characteristics define role expectations which again only can be understood if they are set in relation to other existing age groups. This means that the social structure here essentially is built upon a constructed age hierarchy, which has vital functions for the persistence of the social system.¹³ In addition Eisenstadt observes that peer-group socialisation more and more takes over the transitional functions of dissolving family-bonds and diminishing ties between families and social institutions respectively. Furthermore the transition to adult status is perceived as the most critical and essential moment for social stability which attracts special attention to youth and youth groups and clearly emphasises the problematic youth that does not comply with measurable performance goals (i.e. developmental tasks). The perception of youth as a problem thus is inherent to the structural-functional perspective for it binds compliance with the existing structure to certain social functions and the overall social stability which turns a specific alertness to all non-functional elements. Consequently, the mal-functioning of youth automatically is related to the system. Youth usually turns into a systemic problem in structural-functionalist concepts.¹⁴ Yet it is missed that the

¹¹ Structural-functionalist theory has been the dominating sociological theory for conceptualising society, its constituents, their relations and its overall operation focussing on the functional aspect and aiming at social stability. Its main representatives with broad influences on youth studies and political science respectively were Talcott Parsons, David Easton and Samuel Eisenstadt.

¹² Eisenstadt, Samuel Noah (1966): *Von Generation zu Generation. Altersgruppen und Sozialstruktur*. [From *Generation to Generation - Age Groups and Social Structure*.], München: Juventa, p. 14.

¹³ "The roles each individual adopts throughout his life, have to be defined in such a way, that they clearly specify his relations to the fellow members of society, who find themselves at their specific, different stage of individual development – in his role of carrier or recipient of the cultural and social heritage. The position of the individual in this continuity is decisive for the definition of his own roles, his behaviour and his expectations towards the others." Eisenstadt, Samuel Noah (1966): *Von Generation zu Generation. Altersgruppen und Sozialstruktur*. München: Juventa, p. 17

¹⁴ One example for such a perception provides Hornstein, Walter (1999): *Jugendforschung und Jugendpolitik. Entwicklungen und*

problematic youth often mirrors the perceived and assumed social problems which intrinsically belong to the general social structure or rather the system itself – for which youth in return, for better or for worse, has to stand in.¹⁵ Youth becomes either problem or chance, while the problem discourse is the dominant one. Thus youth becomes a publically well-observed and commented object of research and media on both prevailing and prospective problems. It is a social factor that not yet is a problem but inherits the potential to become one.¹⁶

Youth without past

The less fixed social status makes youth a proper field for testing, as it not yet has a social past and thus is unloaded – at least that is assumed – which makes it an optimal playground for reloading, i.e. reinterpretation of meanings. This is the reason why the assumption of an axiomatic educability and a specific need for education has despite various theoretical reconceptualisations remained the primary basis of any existing youth image. Its core still is stuck in structural-functionalist thinking and developmental approaches of socialisation and integration, as the forming of the people according to functional role requirements can generate social stability. Furthermore the continuous evocation of youth as problem is a guarantee for the future existence of the system as the ‘problem’ calls for social mechanisms of disciplining and control.¹⁷

Hence any attempt to define youth has to struggle with the growing complexity of social structures and its conceptualisations. The ideas of the youth age, its length, character, course and forms, have been adapted to the transformations of an industrialised working society towards a post-modern and globalised service society, so that also theories on youth got split into countless short-living “ad-hoc theories”¹⁸ and attempts to generally reconceptualise social biographies. The idea of a clear-cut life stage youth does not fit any longer to our times. Social biographies more and more got blurred and permeable which above all seem to affect the youth period: their position appears most fragile in between the dependent, to be cared of child and the working, responsible adult so that the transition to the adult world becomes more and more insecure, unpredictable, while the time of education stretches to enormous length and the sphere of labour becomes confusingly diversified.

Strukturen in der zweiten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts. Weinheim: Juventa-Verl. (Materialien zur historischen Jugendforschung), p. 158: “There is much evidence, that youth similar to environment, peace, the Third World itself is a systemic problem, that does not any longer appear as solvable with the usual instruments of political governance due to the conditions of late capitalism – not least because the state is no longer able to really relate to the situation of youth. This would only be possible by way of the social institutions, yet that would require that youth accepts those institutions as ‘theirs’ – in other words: if the institutions are able to response to the needs, problems and interests of the young. Yet, this is barely experienced by the young generations, so that the institutions are not really able to generate the identification and inner loyalty and commitment that are needed as basis for any form of ‘reasonable’, i.e. argument based, discourse.”

¹⁵ Cf. the repeatedly occurring moral panics, which most often are attributed to a dangerous youth but actually stand for a general anxiety due to severe changes, experiences of crisis and the like. See for instance. Springhall, John (1998): Youth, Popular Culture and Moral Panics. Penny Gaffs to Gangsta-Rap, 1830-1996. London: Macmillan.

¹⁶ Cf. Mansel, Jürgen; Griese, Hartmut M.; Scherr, Albert (Eds.) (2003): Theoriedefizite der Jugendforschung. Standortbestimmung und Perspektiven. Weinheim: Juventa-Verl. (Jugendforschung), p. 22: “Society represented by politics, media and interest groups by way of a permanent ‘youth discourse’ tries to assure its present situation and future. That means discourses of youth research are used as ‘early warning system’, mirror and seismograph of social problems. Theoretical debates on youth therefore often tend to adopt a substitute function. Youth research replaces or rather steps in as social research on problematic topics and the future, for youth on the one hand always points to future (‘youth as anticipatory activity’) and on the other hand is constructed ‘as social problem’.”

¹⁷ Foucault, Michel (1977): Discipline and Punish. The Birth of the Prison. London: Allen Lane Penguin Books Ltd.

¹⁸ Griese, Hartmut M. (1982): Sozialwissenschaftliche Jugendtheorien. Eine Einführung. Weinheim/Basel: Beltz. who tries to grasp the phenomenon of the 1970s/80s youth research, which was keen to grasp every ‘new’ form of youthful articulation as a new social movement, reality and the like – but was outlived rather shortly by the next youth phenomena. Those youth cultures were clearly responses to social developments but could not provide for long lasting reconceptualisations.

The dissolution of class society and binding age structures has unfolded of a variety of life-options and possible biographies which opened up various, individualised ways to become an adult.¹⁹

Individualisation here means that the biographies of the people are dissolved from given fixations and handed over as an individual task to decide openly and independently. The share of those life-options that in principle are not open for an own decision diminishes while the share of the openly decided and self-produced biographies increases. That means individualisation of biography here stands for the transformation of socially given biographies into biographies that are and have to be self-made, so that the single individual becomes the 'creator of his life' and by that also has to take the blame for his failures.²⁰

Yet, although the expansion of when and how to fulfil developmental tasks and go further in life has resulted in an enormous variety of possible life-courses, the fundamental requirements of developmental tasks remained stable and moreover became complemented by the demand to not only construct one's own biography but also to constantly reassure and renew it. All life-goals and tasks, however, in some way remain to be bound to the conditions of the labour market, which still are the dominant parameters of the temporal structure of both society and the individual life. And even if the variety of options has dispersed the socially given roles with the result of hardly recognisable role models, for which age seem to have lost its structuring function; it still is failure and success of accomplishing a role and the respective developmental tasks that determine the individual life courses.²¹ This in the end promotes the capitalisation of life-courses, whose values and assets (education, qualifications) then are broken down to social resources, one of which being youth. The romanticised youthful attributes such as power, creativity and freedom have finally turned into capitalised social assets.

Thus youth has in some way lost its significant meaning as a special condition of growing up while at the same time age still has the same structuring and regulating functions with regard to the systems of education and socialisation.²² The diffusion of social roles as it is represented in segmented images of modern, post-modern, globalised etc. youths, has been turned into an instrument of diagnosing social prospects and testing strategies to cope with changes. This advances the probability of perceiving youth as a potential problem (problems usually stir more easily societal debates than the

¹⁹ Social science speaks of a destructuring of the youth period. A further characteristic of a destructuralisation of the youth age are diversified life-courses: youth is not bound to the fact of going to school any longer, age norms have lost their ordering power, generational relations have become a matter of negotiation and are no longer determined by elder authority. "Young people do not claim a moratorium nor certain age-related rights, but define themselves by a social status ... It is not of importance, whether they feel as adult or adolescent, nor if the adults award them with a specific status. With regard to their social self they are adult and adolescent at the same time." In: Abels, Heinz (1993): *Jugend vor der Moderne. Soziologische und psychologische Theorien des 20. Jahrhunderts*. Opladen: Leske + Budrich, p. 518.

²⁰ Ulrich Beck quoted in Tillmann, Klaus-Jürgen (2000): *Sozialisationstheorien. Eine Einführung in den Zusammenhang von Gesellschaft, Institution und Subjektwerdung*. [Reinbek: Rowohlt (Rowohlt's Enzyklopädie), p. 265.

²¹ Even if age on the surface has no longer the importance of positioning someone in society, all social institutions are still structured along age-spans, e.g. schooling regulations, pension requirements etc.

²² "One cannot miss the fact, that youth in social theory only has exemplary meaning: From the viewpoint of a macro-sociological reflection of processes of socialisation and differentiation youth becomes a subsystem, in which age no longer is a condition of socialisation but has turned into an institutional control mechanism." Abels, Heinz (1993): *Jugend vor der Moderne. Soziologische und psychologische Theorien des 20. Jahrhunderts*. Opladen: Leske + Budrich, p. 339. Though one could also say that the meaning of youth also has gained attraction with regard to the idolisation of youth in commercial media. The tendency to transfer juvenility further into adult life is another phenomenon of destructuralisation, cf. the notion of "Puerilisierung" in: Trotha, Trutz von (1982): *Zur Entstehung von Jugend*. In: *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie (KZfSS)* 34 (3), pp. 254–277, pp. 258.

positive correspondent). And since youth is related to future, or rather ideas of future its education and socialisation becomes a means to control the future. Psychological and sociological (i.e. structural-functionalist) conceptualisations of youth thus construct youth images as a social ideology within a functionalist theory.

Youth and societal future

To conceptualise youth as an active part in societal processes also requires going beyond the one-dimensional socialisation into given role-models. It calls for an intentionally presuming and ahead looking individual actor that is continuously reinterpreting and reshaping social life and thus reconstructing social reality. The adoption of social roles is a reciprocal process, in which society is conceived of as a reality that is formed by interpretations, the allocation of meaning and the objectivation of experience, and eventually results in an institutionalisation of social structure and roles, order and orientation, which then are represented in socialisation processes.²³

Roles, as for instance understood by Berger/Luckmann, stand for institutionalised standardisations of behaviour which both represent social reality and communicate social knowledge. Social reality can only be experienced through the representation of roles and by experiencing and recognising other roles. Yet this process is subject to the course of time and hence change. Future then becomes a common point of reference which has to be guaranteed within the scope of individual social actions (in the present time)²⁴ as the generational transmission of institutions would only be possible with this guarantee of an existing social reality. This in turn implies that social action has to be predictable, conceivable and reasonably distributed to social roles.

The identification of youth with the future of its society is the representation of such a reciprocal process of constructing social reality. Youth does not only represent and guarantee the future existence of society but has the duty to actively contribute to this future, to upgrade social conditions yet without shaking its fundamentals too heavy. Youth embodies future, not only in a metaphorical sense, but also as an actor who is bound to attributes such as hope, the possibility to redo decisions or to start better off. Those ascribed attributes thus are linked to certain values and even assignments or missions that would provide the young generation with a meaning, e.g. that of transforming or advancing society. The integration of the image and its social or rather national mission into a social and chronological order defines social power relations, creates societal values and sets hierarchies as if given by laws of natural growth. Youth becomes a matter of social power, as its image is at the adult's command to legitimise their power. Yet this naturalisation of power collapses when confronted with the actual conditions of unpredictability. Hence the scientific and social occupation with youth has become an instrument of assurance for the adult society. The ambivalence of youth which is the result of the tension between ascribed images and experienced reality (of both actual and former young generations) opens up for several distinctive meanings and

²³ Cf. Berger, Peter; Luckmann, Thomas (1999): Die gesellschaftliche Konstruktion der Wirklichkeit. Eine Theorie der Wissenssoziologie. Frankfurt/M. See also Weymann, Ansgar (1998): Sozialer Wandel. Theorien zur Dynamik der modernen Gesellschaft. Weinheim, München: Juventa (Grundlagentexte Soziologie), p. 58: "The internalisation of an objective reality as subjective reality of a person during the life-long socialisation process assures the understanding and the acquisition of the existing world anew, results in recognised and legitimated participation in society and counteracts alienation and individualisation."

²⁴ Cf. Berger, Peter; Luckmann, Thomas (1999): Die gesellschaftliche Konstruktion der Wirklichkeit. Eine Theorie der Wissenssoziologie. Frankfurt/M., pp. 110.

it is an ambivalence that is well experienced by the young themselves. The real young people, the age group with own needs and wishes, are not yet to be taken seriously, while the constructed image, the generation, carries the acknowledged and awaited signature of future – conspicuously described in an article in a journal of the German Jugendbewegung in the first half of the 19th century:

“The position of youth in the nation is basically determined by its twofold and even ambivalent constitution. So that youth and everything young always will be ambivalent: Youth is age group and generation. To make the difference clear one could stretch and simplify as follows: Youth as age group always is wrong, youth as generation always is right. They are wrong because the young age is a preliminary stage for the following, because the young still have to become men. As generation though, youth always is right, because it is foreshadowing and pre-shaping what is to come to reality. [...] Generation is the entity of those, who act during one period of time. Still a generation does not build a common project, it does not act according to a plan nor does it follow one will. As historical entity it is only conceivable when looking back. Still, also the current generation lives with a consciousness of being a generation of fate, like workers at a construction site that was assigned to them. And all humans that belong to one generation will recognise each other due to a secret language that only they would intuitively understand.”²⁵

In that retrospective generational legitimation youth appears as the awaited creator of history. However, although the image is retrospectively constructed it is applied to the present youth, which means that historical experience is objectified and generalised, exempt the conditions of the current time and circumstances. In such constructions and images, youth gets in touch with Promethean abilities, while societies are sequenced into an engine of progress. The idea of progress then more and more turns into a condition for the existence and stability of society and finally represents an ideal of social harmony.

The social group youth thus is captured within an itself replicating circle of an ambivalent existence between wished and glorified attributes and assumed deficits and defects. Within that circle the glorification or even mythologisation of youth is confronted with a likewise exaggerated assumption of a critical condition of the current civilisation that has to be contained by rigid control and socialisation. This means each image is clearly related to a certain generation, to its conditions of living, learning and working as well as to its wishes, hopes and fears, so that one can observe waves of alerts about a threatening young generation and worships of the promising avant-garde, that take regular turns.²⁶

²⁵ Quote from *Deutscher Freischar*, 1928/29; quoted in Hafenecker, Benno (1995): *Jugendbilder. Zwischen Hoffnung, Kontrolle, Erziehung und Dialog*. Opladen: Leske und Budrich, p. 25.

²⁶ “The response to that challenge primarily is education, which also is understood as prevention, in order to avoid the ‘general evil’, the ‘revival of the evil’. The ‘black pedagogy’ is full of projections of fear onto children and young people. The allegation and description of an ‘essentially bad nature’ of man and of a seductive civilisation and the necessary domestication of youth (among others through strong public authorities, instruments of punishment and education) backs up two hypotheses: one about the alleged natural state of youth and society (as naturalisation, essential and eternal feature of being young, mythologisation), the other about the critical (threatened) condition of culture and civilisation.” Hafenecker, Benno (1995): *Jugendbilder. Zwischen Hoffnung, Kontrolle, Erziehung und Dialog*. Opladen: Leske und Budrich, p. 87.

Generation or hero

Two conceptualisations of youth centre around the creation of change: the concept of generation and the building of hero systems in nation-building processes.

With the concept of generation age-related groups are grouped together into a common *Zeitheimat*.²⁷ Hence the forming of generations goes along with the chronological structuration of social relations. “Belonging” to a social structure is determined by the belonging to a certain social time and its experiences. Generations have become particularly interesting as a structural construct since the acceleration of social time led to increasingly diverging realms of experience and horizons of expectation²⁸ – generations have become some kind of measuring instrument for societal progress and modernisation and thus for social transformation.

The concept of generation helps to collectively perceive historical transformations within a biographically limited period of time and to connect it to the generational renewal of society. Individual lifetime, generational time and historical time are since mutually related categories of historical experience, which are fundamental for the understanding and structuring of history. This also implies that there exist ‘specific experiential terms and thresholds for each generation, which – once institutionalised or passed – can bring about a common history’. Generations are not only a social fact because people view themselves as members of a generation, but because the concept of generation is used to interpret and order the experiences of social transformations in modern society. Generation is a basic historical concept, because it provides a collective category of finitude.²⁹

Thus concepts of generation³⁰ are meant to grasp social transformation as phenomenon of temporal acceleration. Furthermore these concepts altogether speak of the young generation without naming it.³¹ Hence, youth represents the dynamics of change and embodies a horizon of expectation, i.e. future or the starting off into another future, while at the same time a generation has the task of cultural accumulation and cultural creation which also comprises the gathering of experiences of former generations.³² It is anchoring these experiences in the present time and at the same time framing the unknown horizon of expectations. The young generations appear as agents of future, while their respective social images also have to incorporate the experiences of former generations.

²⁷ The term was used by the German author W.G. Sebald and was taken over by social science as an expression of a generational affiliation and sense, cf. Jureit, Ulrike (2006): *Generationenforschung*. [Research on Generations]. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht [u.a.] (Grundkurs neue Geschichte, 2856), p.7.

²⁸ “The idea of progress which has got to the heart by saying – if shortened – that old and new clash in the science, the arts, between countries and between status and classes, has become an everyday experience since the French Revolution. The generations lived in a common realm of experience, yet this was split open depending on the different perspectives of political generations and social positions. People knew since and still know they live in a period of transition, which scales experiences and expectations temporarily.” Koselleck, Reinhart (2003): *Vergangene Zukunft*. Zur Semantik geschichtlicher Zeiten. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp (Suhrkamp-Taschenbuch Wissenschaft, 757), p. 367.

²⁹ Jureit, Ulrike (2006): *Generationenforschung*. [Research on Generations]. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht [u.a.] (Grundkurs neue Geschichte, 2856), p. 9.

³⁰ Above all I refer to the concept of generation by Karl Mannheim: *The Problem of Generations*. In Karl Mannheim (Ed.): *Essays on the sociology of knowledge*. With assistance of ed. by Paul Kecskemeti. Second impr. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul (International Library of sociology and social reconstruction), pp. 276–320.

³¹ Cf. for instance Niethammer, Lutz (2003): *Sind Generationen identisch?* In Jürgen Reulecke (Ed.): *Generationalität und Lebensgeschichte im 20. Jahrhundert*. With assistance of Elisabeth Müller-Luckner. München: Oldenbourg (58), pp. 1–16.

³² Mannheim, Karl (1959): *The Problem of Generations*. In Karl Mannheim (Ed.): *Essays on the sociology of knowledge*. With assistance of ed. by Paul Kecskemeti. Second impr. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul (International Library of sociology and social reconstruction), pp. 276–320, see esp. pp. 292.

Thus a generation carries both conditions of a temporary passage, the actual continuation as long as there is human reproduction and the infinity of a horizon, that moves even farther into the distance the more one tries to reach it, as well as a cyclical movement.³³ The former represents the finitude of youth as a period of transition, thus its own, imminent end, while the latter stands for the infinite repetition of the same in present time, where realm of experience and horizon of expectation converge without really colliding, so that the generational narrative runs the risk of ever repeating itself – youth is trapped within social times, as long as the agents are not able to crash the existing scope of experience, for a new horizon emerges only if that scope of experiences bursts.³⁴

Heroes generally are young and can only serve their duty while they are of young age. Mostly heroes die while they execute their duties and deeds. The hero, like youth, has to pass tests, an odyssey-like period of probation and the hero often is linked to a notion of sacrifice for a certain matter. So the hero as well as youth is connected to a certain place – a society – yet his agency is projected into another future of that place, which places him outside society. The hero is an outsider yet linked to the community through an ascribed function that will guarantee the continuity of that community. The core is a trip beyond the present condition towards a future 'somewhere else' led by a certain idea that is embodied by the hero or youth.³⁵

Conclusion

After reviewing different approaches to conceptualise youth and its conditions of entering adult society one has to state that the integration process is subject to rather strict restrictions of existing structures and institutions. Political participation of the young generation is thus – even stronger than for adult cohorts – determined by, for example, experiences of dissatisfaction, injustice, or exclusion, and by people's everyday routines and their social interdependencies. The relationship between youth and society becomes particularly sensible in times of social conflict and transformation, since the decision about which symbols, structures and institutions of the collective will be taken over to the new configuration of social and political life can result in strong generational conflicts. In such times, the youngsters are confronted with a situation in which they both carry the burden of embodying the future of society and have the chance to participate actively in the process

³³ Cf. Bilstein, Johannes (1996): Zur Metaphorik des Generationenverhältnisses. In: Eckart Liebau, Christoph Wulf (Eds.): Generation. Versuche über eine pädagogisch-anthropologische Grundbedingung. Weinheim: Dt. Studien-Verl. (Pädagogische Anthropologie, 3), pp. 157–189, on the metaphor of generation, who states that generation as a concept comprises three perspectives side by side: relationality, continuity and cyclicity – i.e. defining membership, structuring social time and the cycle of death-rebirth. Hence, generation is time and structure.

³⁴ Cf. Kosselleck, Reinhart (2003): *Vergangene Zukunft. Zur Semantik geschichtlicher Zeiten*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp (Suhrkamp-Taschenbuch Wissenschaft, 757), pp. 354. "An unsatisfied prophecy always had been repeatable. Even more so the error, that the non-compliance of such an expectation unmasked, turned into an evidence that the apocalyptic prophecy will come true the next time, with even greater probability. The iterative structure of apocalyptic expectations induced that contrasting experiences were immunised on the ground of this world. They attested ex post the opposite of what they at first seemed to have approved of. They were expectations that could not be outrun by obstructing experiences, because they reached beyond the world. ... From one unsatisfied expectation to the next passed generations, thus a revival of the apocalyptic prophecy was embedded into the natural cycle of the generations. Therefore the long-term earthly experiences of everyday life never clashed with those expectations that were related to the end of the world. The opposition of Christian expectations and earthly experiences were related to each other, yet could not refute each other. The eschatology hence was reproducible to that extent and as long as the realm of experience in this world did not fundamentally transformed." (p. 361)

³⁵ Lenzen, Dieter (1985): *Mythologie der Kindheit. Die Verewigung des Kindlichen in der Erwachsenenkultur; versteckte Bilder und vergessene Geschichten*. Reinbek: Rowohlt (Rowohlt's Enzyklopädie, 421), p. 300. He lists certain characteristics of an heroic story, that could be transferred to the stages of psychological development and characteristics of adolescence: e.g. apotheosis of the parents, being exposed to special threats, a specific power – omnipotence, the essential task to fight a 'monster' (= being an adult), which is coped with in several stages, one of which is symbolising some sort of 'rebirth' (e.g. as new member of society).

of shaping the new structures, still they have to make their way against the powers of persistence of the old.

With the development of a standard of youth, specific characteristics have been ascribed to the youth period, one of which being the ability to generate social change within the framework of progressive improvement. These standardisations set clear limits to the scope of action and development of the young generations, for they are at the same time viewed as carriers of a cultural heritage, which the members of a generation shall accumulate and transfer to the subsequent generations. A generational change, which naturally is underway, hence is understood as necessary feature of the continuation of society and consequently is a category of a social order, as it structures individual as well as social experiences and determines social membership. Generations, and as a rule young generations, are conceptualised as category of social action, particularly as initiators of renewal.

A new beginning is a critical point for any social structure, which primarily is wishing for stability and continuation beyond the present generation. Yet, every social structure inherently exists with a specific expectation towards its future. "Youth is the future of our society" is an articulation of such a, yet completely unspecified, expectation. It is open for any projection between the two poles 'danger for society' and 'chance of society'. Youth here is no longer a causal, functional concept but turns into a semantic conceptualisation within a system of meanings which structure a social system and provides it with sense, that legitimises the order and binds its members. One essential element of legitimation and membership commitment is the assurance of a predictable future existence for society. Still, future is not completely predictable or statistically deducible. In a temporal order of society future by nature is the unknown and not assignable. Hence, social structures produce an imagery that will repress the uncertainties the course of time indispensably implies, either through rituals, myths as in traditional societies or through mechanisms of controlling, such as images of modern youth.

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Part II – Youth and Politics in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean

Youth as Political Actors after the “Arab Spring”: The Case of Tunisia

Carolina Silveira

Introduction

The series of demonstrations now commonly known as the “Arab Spring” ignited the Arab world in 2010/2011, and saw young people taking to the streets to protest against their corrupt government system hoping to make a change. The initial spark that aroused this wave of protests took place in Tunisia, as a humble fruit vendor set himself ablaze after being humiliated, beaten and robbed by police officers. The protests in Tunisia, which have since been dubbed the “Tunisian Revolution”, expanded across the Middle East in a domino effect that attracted attention the world over, largely thanks to young bloggers who organized demonstrations, filmed events as they happened, and distributed information online. There is no denying the widespread attention garnered by the Arab spring demonstrations, but we must now consider the results and political changes achieved since these events. The focus of this paper lies on youth political involvement in Tunisia, with the aim of providing an understanding of the ways in which young people have tried to gain influence, both through traditional politics, as well as through alternative methods of political engagement, such as civil society groups and social networking sites. The demographics in Tunisian society will be considered as a starting point, followed by an investigation of youth political representation.

Before delving into an analysis of young people as political actors, it is important to define ‘youth’ and to look at the demographics that shape society in Arab world, and more specifically, in Tunisia. In the context of the Arab spring, however, this task is not as straightforward as it might seem. In ‘Problematizing Arab Youth’, Emma Murphy points out that little attention has been given by scholars to the difficulties of identifying ‘on whom the term [youth] might legitimately be conferred or what constitutes the set of interests and identities which enable ‘youths’ to cohere into a distinct sub-set’.³⁶ However, focusing on how we frame the youth segment is essential if we are to understand ‘who they were, what it was they wanted or their significance as a rising social and political force’³⁷ in Tunisia. Although often described as a youth led movement, many who were deeply engaged in the protests may have fallen outside of the ‘youth’ age bracket, which according to UNESCO (the United Nations’ educational, scientific and cultural organization), lies between the ages of 15 and 24. This strict classification becomes more complex with UNESCO’s additional understanding of ‘youth’ as a ‘period of transition from the dependence of childhood to adulthood’s independence and awareness of our interdependence as members of a community.’³⁸ Taking the latter definition as a point of analysis, ‘youth’ becomes a fluid segment rather than a fixed age group. This conceptualization serves the purposes of this paper well, as many involved in the Arab Spring demonstrations may have fallen outwith the 15 to 24 age bracket, but found themselves in a period

³⁶ Emma C. Murphy, “Problematizing Arab Youth: Generational Narratives of Systemic Failure.” *Mediterranean Politics* 17, no. 1 (2012): p. 2.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ UNESCO (2014): “Youth-Definition.” Accessed March 9, 2014. <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/youth/youth-definition/>.

of transition between dependency and adulthood. It is important to keep in mind, however, that the statistics used throughout this paper come from secondary sources, and therefore reflect age categories of 'youth' as used in each particular research cited; the general idea of 'youth' will nonetheless retain its broader meaning.

Conceptualising Tunisia's youth

The 'youth' segment, particularly in the context of the Arab world, can be analysed in a variety of ways, as Murphy explains. She proposes four different approaches to conceptualising the Arab youth: 1) as a demographic 'bulge'; 2) as a human resources issue; 3) as a stage of transition into adulthood; and 4) as a constructed identity.³⁹ Looking firstly at the so-called demographic bulge, there is no denying that the Arab world is home to an overwhelmingly young population, with 65% of all residents in this region being under 25 in 2012.⁴⁰ However, some demographic differences can be identified between the various countries in the Arab region. Tunisia's demographics skew towards an intermediate age structure, with 40% percent of the population being under-25.⁴¹ This strongly contrasts with countries like Yemen, where the percentage of under-25s is closer to 70%.⁴² When we consider the demographics in Western countries, however, even Tunisia's intermediate age structure appears strikingly young. Taking some European countries as examples, the under-25 population in 2014 lies at 29% in the UK, 23% in Germany, 24% in Italy, and 24% Greece.

A youthful demographic can have an undeniable impact on society and politics, particularly with regard to human resources.⁴³ Unemployment rates, for example, are often higher in countries with such a large proportion of young people. Considering that under-25s are a segment of the population less likely to have significant work experience, and taking into account the sparse employment opportunities even for the highly qualified, some assert that 'the spark that ignited the uprising was not a cry for democracy but a demand for jobs.'⁴⁴ Unemployment statistics certainly corroborate this theory, with unemployment standing at 30% among 15 to 24 year olds in Tunisia in 2010.⁴⁵ For the highly skilled youth, i.e. those with higher education, the rates were at a staggering 61%.⁴⁶

The increasing enrolment demand on all education sectors has also posed a problem for young people, leaving many without the skills or qualifications necessary to compete in the job market. The struggle to find employment or to receive an appropriate education in order to develop their skills, leads to a generation that feels excluded and marginalized from society, unable to contribute to the working community and often lacking future prospects. Young people are thus prevented from

³⁹ Murphy, "Problematizing Arab Youth", 7.

⁴⁰ Floris, Sylvie. "Youth, those Anti-Heroes of the Arab Spring." *IEMed Mediterranean Yearbook* (2012): 2. Accessed March 8, 2014. http://www.iemed.org/observatori-en/arees-danalisi/arxiu-adjunts/anuari/med.2012/Floris_en.pdf.

⁴¹ Index Mundi. "Tunisia Demographics Profile." Accessed March 9, 2014. http://www.indexmundi.com/tunisia/demographics_profile.html.

⁴² Inter Press Service News. "Young Yemen Multiplies Without Growth." Accessed March 9, 2014. <http://www.ipsnews.net/2013/06/young-yemen-multiplies-without-growth/>

⁴³ Murphy, "Problematizing Arab Youth", 7.

⁴⁴ El-Khawas, Mohamed A. "Tunisia's Jasmine Revolution: Causes and Impact." *Mediterranean Quarterly* 23, no. 4 (2012): 8.

⁴⁵ Ilham Haouas, Edward Sayre, and Mahmoud Yagoubi. "Youth unemployment in Tunisia: Characteristics and policy responses." *Topics in Middle Eastern and African Economies* 14 (2012): 404.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

entering the transitional phase into adulthood, as they cannot marry or even move out of their parents' home without a fixed income.⁴⁷

This brings us to the final categorization of the Arab youth as an independent, constructed identity. Floris asserts that the youth in the Tunisian society 'were in a position of "sub-citizens," which explains why the first word to be chanted at demonstrations was "dignity"'.⁴⁸ The feeling of disaffection within this large youth segment was undoubtedly aggravated by the failure of the government to appropriately deal with the difficulties they faced. This failure can be largely affiliated to state corruption, repression, lack of investment in the underdeveloped central and western regions of the country, and an education system that did not provide young people with the skills required for the few employment opportunities available.⁴⁹ Three years after the revolution, Tunisia's unemployment rate has risen to 42% among young people,⁵⁰ indicating that the socio-economic problems facing them still remain. Although the circumstances that led to the Arab Spring cannot be simplified into one single issue, it is clear that the youth, frustrated with the difficulties directly affecting them and desiring a change from this 'sub-citizen' existence, were at the heart of the movement.

Youth representation in Tunisian politics

The following section considers the extent to which the youth in Tunisia achieved the changes that they strove for. When regarding the level of satisfaction with politics, one of the first questions to ask is whether young people feel represented by the politicians in power, or simply whether they are being heard. In this regard, it seems that not much has changed. According to a poll conducted by the Al Jazeera Studies Centre in 2013, 81% of young people (17-31) do not feel represented by the Constituent Assembly, and only 14% claim that the revolution has been a success.⁵¹ Tunisia Live, a news website created by a group of young Tunisians in the aftermath of the Tunisian Revolution, reported that in the 2011 parliamentary elections, only 17% of Tunisia's youth (aged 18 to 25) registered to vote.⁵² Alarming, out of those who did vote in the 2011 election, 14% said they would not vote again.⁵³ Sarah Dickson's article on voter trend in Tunisia deals with the puzzling question of why some young people 'seem to have "given up" on the effectiveness of voting',⁵⁴ despite expressing an interest in political change. The interviews she conducted reveal a wide array of political opinions, but one unifying trend: although most young people were uninvolved in politics before the revolution, they have now become extremely interested in political developments.⁵⁵

⁴⁷ Murphy, "Problematizing Arab Youth", 10.

⁴⁸ Floris, "Youth, those Anti-Heroes of the Arab Spring", 2.

⁴⁹ "Youth and the Tunisian Revolution." Conflict prevention and peace forum (2011): 12. Accessed March 9, 2014. http://webarchive.ssrc.org/pdfs/Alcinda_Honwana_Youth_and_the_Tunisian_Revolution_September_2011-CPPF_policy%20paper.pdf

⁵⁰ Ulandssekretariatet. "Tunisia - Labour Market Profile 2013." Accessed March 9, 2014. http://www.ulandssekretariatet.dk/sites/default/files/uploads/public/PDF/LMP/tunisia_2013_final_web.pdf.

⁵¹ World Bulletin. "Arab youth feel alienated from politics." Accessed March 9, 2014. <http://www.worldbulletin.net/?aType=haber&ArticleID=114200>.

⁵² Tunisia Live. "Tunisian Youth: Between Political Exclusion and Civic Engagement." Accessed March 9, 2014. <http://www.tunisia-live.net/2013/06/14/tunisian-youth-between-political-exclusion-and-civic-engagement/#sthash.8tWklcpl.dpuf>.

⁵³ Dickson, Sarah. "To Vote or Not to Vote: Youth Political Agency in Post-Revolutionary Tunisia." Independent Study Project (ISP) Collection 4, no. 1 (2013): 8.

⁵⁴ Dickson, "To Vote or Not to Vote", 2.

⁵⁵ Dickson, "To Vote or Not to Vote", 13.

The disengagement from voting among the youth can be attributed to many factors, one of which is the persisting distrust of political parties and the political system in general.⁵⁶ Many were dissatisfied with the election results of 2011, and complained that the new government showed similar problems to the regime under Ben Ali. The fact that around a quarter of National Constituent Assembly (NCA) members switched party affiliations since they were elected only serves to worsen the situation.⁵⁷ Furthermore, a consensus on what a democracy entails is still lacking in Tunisia; according to Dickson, a period of 'political learning' is required in order to transition to a long-lasting democratic system, but young Tunisians have not yet developed a 'collective sense of democratic values.'⁵⁸ Some young people even question how they can feel represented when many parties are still led by significantly older politicians.⁵⁹ Beji Caid Essebsi, leader of the secular party Nidaa Tounes is 88 years old, much older than the Tunisian life expectancy of 74, and was elected President in December 2014.⁶⁰

Youth involvement in traditional politics

Since much of the youth in Tunisia disapprove of the politicians in power, it is interesting to analyse the involvement of young people in traditional politics, i.e. as active policy makers. The National Constituent Assembly (NCA) is taken as an example here, as it was the first legislative body drafting policies and the new constitution after the Tunisian revolution. Out of 217 members of the NCA, 9 were under 30 (4%), while the vast majority were over 50 (76%).⁶¹ These numbers are not entirely surprising, since an analysis of age structure of constituent representatives in many Western countries might reveal similarly low numbers of young people. What makes these figures a cause for concern is the aforementioned demographic youth 'bulge'. Considering that such a large proportion of the population is under 30, and this segment of society is arguably suffering the most from the current economical and political climate, it is worrisome that they only represent 4% of the NCA. However, many young people show no interest in being politicians themselves, or even being affiliated with political parties. From those who did join a party after the revolution, many withdrew after elections because they were disappointed with the strategies of these parties and the lack of cohesion and collaboration of ideas, especially between the younger and the older members. Young people interviewed by Tunisia Live claimed that belonging to a political party means committing to speak in the name of the party, which takes away the freedom to act or express personal opinions.⁶² Few young people hold decision-making positions due to lack of political experience; and yet they are consistently denied opportunities to gain this experience. The new institution responsible for organizing and supervising the elections, Instance Supérieure Indépendante pour les Élections (ISIE), has been described as the authority responsible for 'ensuring democratic, free, pluralistic, fair and

⁵⁶ Dickson, "To Vote or Not to Vote", 5.

⁵⁷ Tunisia Live. "'Political Tourism' in the NCA: No Passport Necessary." Accessed March 9, 2014. <http://www.tunisia-live.net/2013/07/03/political-tourism-all-the-rage-in-the-nca/>

⁵⁸ Dickson, "To Vote or Not to Vote", 10.

⁵⁹ Tunisia Live. "Tunisian Youth: Between Political Exclusion and Civic Engagement." Accessed March 9, 2014. <http://www.tunisia-live.net/2013/06/14/tunisian-youth-between-political-exclusion-and-civic-engagement/#sthash.8tWklcpl.dpuf>

⁶⁰ Washington Post. "An interview with Tunisia's Beji Caid Essebsi". Accessed March 9, 2014. http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/an-interview-with-tunisias-beji-caid-essebsi-leading-voice-of-the-secular-opposition/2013/12/12/f40f6690-6344-11e3-aa81-e1dab1360323_story.html.

⁶¹ Marsad. "L'Assemblée." Accessed March 9, 2014. <http://www.marsad.tn/fr/assemblee>.

⁶² Tunisia Live. "Tunisian Youth: Between Political Exclusion and Civic Engagement." Accessed March 9, 2014. <http://www.tunisia-live.net/2013/06/14/tunisian-youth-between-political-exclusion-and-civic-engagement/#sthash.8tWklcpl.dpuf>

transparent elections'.⁶³ However, this important political body has established a minimum age of 35 and at least 10 years of experience as prerequisites for membership, making young people automatically ineligible to apply for a position.

In the run-up to the legislative and presidential elections of 2014, some changes in favour of younger people can be observed in the political system. Around 40% of newly registered voters were between the ages of 18 and 30.⁶⁴ Furthermore, due to amendments in the law regarding legislative elections, every electoral list must now contain at least one candidate under the age of 30 among the top 3 candidates on the list.⁶⁵ But despite the encouraging number of registered young voters, getting young people to turn up on voting day still poses a challenge. Many remain disconnected from the political process, blaming their reluctance to vote on the lack of reliable information and a distrust of political parties.⁶⁶ To counter this perception, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) have been working tirelessly to improve youth participation in Tunisian politics. According to Mohamed Madhkour, the liaison between the ISIE and Civil Society Organisations, 'young people in CSOs are a primary reason why [ISIE] received the [large] number of [voter] registrations from younger age groups.'⁶⁷

Civil Society Organisations in Tunisia

Frustrated with institutionalized political participation, there is a growing sentiment among the youth of Tunisia pointing to the idea that to really incite change, the best course of action is to work with civil society rather than to engage in traditional politics, with many now undertaking more informal paths towards building their nation's future. Tunisia has experienced a sudden wave of new youth-led civil society organizations (CSOs) since the Revolution, including non-governmental organizations (NGOs), faith based organizations and more. Although CSOs existed under the Ben Ali regime, the restrictions on such groups made it very difficult for them to operate. These laws were reformed by the interim government after the revolution, providing CSOs and their donors and funders with freedom from 'oppressive legal impediments'.⁶⁸ These organizations have become an important part of the democratization process and have shaped political culture. The participation of civil society in the political process is generally seen as necessary and legitimate among democracy advocates. CSOs can generally take on two prevailing roles: Creating dialogue, and/or providing services. In the case of Tunisia, many CSOs tend to act as lobbyists, watchdogs against corruption, or educators of citizens' rights.

The organization 'I Watch Tunisia' for instance has been successful in exerting some influence in political decision-making. They have monitored the progress of the NCA on the Tunisian constitution, creating a website where people can voice their opinion, and vote on each article of the constitution.

⁶³ The International Republican Institute. "Tunisia Elections Dispatch." Accessed September 26, 2014. http://www.iri.org/sites/default/files/2014%20July%2029%20Tunisia%20Elections%20Dispatch%20No.%201-Voter%20Registration_0.pdf.

⁶⁴ Kiran Alvi. "Will Tunisia's youth head to the ballots?". Accessed September 26, 2014. <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/09/will-tunisia-youth-head-ballots-20149231189278322.html>.

⁶⁵ Jasmine Foundation. "Discussions on New Election Law Top Political and Media Agenda." Accessed September 26, 2014. <http://www.jasmine-foundation.org/en/?p=892>.

⁶⁶ Kiran Alvi. "Will Tunisia's youth head to the ballots?". Accessed September 26, 2014. <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/09/will-tunisia-youth-head-ballots-20149231189278322.html>.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Shelley Deane, "Transforming Tunisia: The Role of Civil Society in Tunisia's Transition." International Alert (2013): 12. Accessed March 9, 2014. <http://www.international-alert.org/sites/default/files/publications/Tunisia2013EN.pdf>

Shortly after Tunisia's NCA was elected, 'I Watch Tunisia' also held a 'mock' assembly, i.e. a simulated version of the NCA, in which 217 youths from throughout Tunisia proposed legislation for their country's future. These suggestions were then brought before real NCA members as recommendations during a press conference. Some of the proposed legislations even caught the interest of the NCA members, who chose 3 of the recommendations for further development.⁶⁹ Moreover, 'I Watch Tunisia' hosted the International Anti-Corruption conference (IACC) in 2014, the first to be held in the Arab World. Mouheb Garoui, president of 'I Watch', talks about the importance of the event:

'This is an honour for the Tunisian civil society working on transparency and fighting corruption. It's a kind of official recognition of the role of youth in this transitional period.'⁷⁰

For many young people, CSOs allow more political freedom as they do not involve partisan alliance, which in turn makes it easier to create dialogue between holders of opposing political ideologies. This is particularly important since much of the political scene in Tunisia is dominated by the conflict between secular and religious parties.⁷¹

In the context of the 2014 elections, CSOs have played a significant role in engaging the youth of Tunisia. More than 2,500 volunteers from 140 CSOs worked together with the ISIE to increase voter registration, with the majority of volunteers being under the age of 30.⁷² The CSOs Swaty and I watch Tunisia organised events targeted at young people in a bid to 'take registration papers to them....rather than wait for them to come to us'.⁷³ Other CSOs aimed to help already registered young voters to make informed decisions on voting day. JID Tunisie (Independent Young Democrats of Tunisia) targeted the undecided or less politically active youth, helping them to find a political party that fits their interests. Al Bawsala, an organisation composed entirely of Tunisian activists under 30, has posted online the profiles of politicians running in the elections in order to help young people make more informed decisions.

However, there are limits on the extent to which CSOs are able to assist in achieving democratic change. The role of religion as a threat to this transition is an issue raised by some scholars: 'for every organisation in favour of democratization, there is likely to be another in favour of more conservative social values'.⁷⁴ Money can also be an issue for the sustained work of these organizations. Some rely on foreign funding, but this can raise questions over motivation and expectation. Foreign funding of CSOs can 'narrow the space for independent civil society', as it sometimes undermines home-grown initiatives.⁷⁵ A further limitation lies in the fact that the work of CSOs has not expanded in rural areas to the same extent that it has in urban regions of the country. Nonetheless, it seems that the rise in

⁶⁹ Tunisia Live. "Tunisian Youth: Between Political Exclusion and Civic Engagement." Accessed March 9, 2014. <http://www.tunisia-live.net/2013/06/14/tunisian-youth-between-political-exclusion-and-civic-engagement/#sthash.8tWklcpl.dpuf>

⁷⁰ The Tunis Times. "I Watch to host the International Anti-Corruption Conference (IACC) 2014." Accessed March 9, 2014. <http://www.thetunistimes.com/2013/10/i-watch-to-host-the-international-anti-corruption-conference-iacc-2014-2014/>.

⁷¹ Reuters. "Tunisian secular parties merge to face Islamists." Accessed March 9, 2014. <http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/02/11/us-tunisia-parties-idUSTRE81A0LP20120211>

⁷² Kiran Alvi. "Will Tunisia's youth head to the ballots?". Accessed September 26, 2014. <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/09/will-tunisia-youth-head-ballots-20149231189278322.html>

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Deane, "Transforming Tunisia: The Role of Civil Society in Tunisia's Transition", 21.

⁷⁵ Deane, "Transforming Tunisia: The Role of Civil Society in Tunisia's Transition", 13.

Civil Society Organizations has been a positive outcome from the revolution by allowing young people to become more engaged in politics.

Social networking sites

Another relevant element of youth politics in Tunisia has been the Internet, or more specifically, social networking sites (SNS). It is commonly known that young activists successfully used social media to organize the protests in 2010/2011. But does the Internet play a political role in Tunisia today? Many would argue that social networking websites are indeed a major forum through which the youth can be politically involved. The study conducted by Dickson shows that many young people feel they are able to keep politically informed through Facebook: 'When asked how they are involved in politics, many reported that they post political statuses on Facebook to express their opinions.'⁷⁶ Furthermore, according to her study, the youth seemed 'excited and proud to be able to keep up with politics and share their opinions with others [online].'⁷⁷ Another study by Breuer and Groshek showed similarly positive findings. They claim that SNS are perceived by young people as a reliable source of political information and a safe forum for exchanging opinions.⁷⁸ The Internet has also taken on the role of 'uncensored news agency' allowing for free and more importantly – independent – news feeds.⁷⁹ Furthermore, it can be a way for the Tunisian diaspora to be involved in the developments in their country.⁸⁰ Poell and Darmoni point out for example, that the use of Twitter during the revolution was of 'crucial importance for the transnational communication process'⁸¹, as it allowed those in Tunisia to reach diaspora networks, fostering quick diffusion of news.

Conclusion

In conclusion, despite the difficulties still facing the youth of Tunisia, and their disillusionment with election results after the Tunisian Revolution, it seems that the fall of Ben Ali brought about a change in attitude among young people. Youth engagement in Tunisian politics ranged from little to no involvement before the revolution due to Ben Ali's restrictive governance. The old system held control over almost every aspect of social society, including the media, CSOs, political parties and education. For many, taking a neutral stance seemed like the only viable option under the old regime.⁸² In the aftermath of the revolution, drastic changes took place with regard to the involvement of Tunisia's youth in political movements. Most young people now express a real interest in the political developments of their country. How they find agency, however, can differ from person to person. Social media continues to play an important role in this population segment, just as it did during the protests. Facebook for example, has become a vital way to freely voice opinions on political issues. Furthermore, many young people seem to be drawn towards Civil Society Organisations rather than traditional political channels due to lingering problems of cohesion within

⁷⁶ Dickson, "To Vote or Not to Vote", 13.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Anita Breuer, and Jacob Groshek. "Online Media and Offline Empowerment in Post-Rebellion Tunisia: An Analysis of Internet Use During Democratic Transition." *Journal of Information Technology & Politics* 11, no. 1 (2013): 40.

⁷⁹ Al Jazeera. "Tunisia: A media led revolution?" Accessed March 9, 2014. <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2011/01/2011116142317498666.html>.

⁸⁰ European Journal of Media Studies. "Twitter as a multilingual space: The articulation of the Tunisian revolution through #sidibouid." Accessed March 9, 2014. <http://www.necus-ejms.org/twitter-as-a-multilingual-space-the-articulation-of-the-tunisian-revolution-through-sidibouid-by-thomas-poell-and-kaouthar-darmoni/>.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Dickson, "To Vote or Not to Vote", 14.

party lines, distrust of the political system, restrictive age requirements, and a lack of information. As some scholars have observed, Tunisia is in a political learning process necessary for democratic transition. It remains to be seen how the situation will develop in the coming years, and whether this new attitude to politics will be enough to create lasting change.

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Abbreviations List

CSO Civil Society Organisation

IACC International Anti-Corruption conference

NCA National Constituent Assembly

NGO Non-Governmental Organisation

SNS Social Networking Sites

ISIE Instance Supérieure Indépendante pour les Élections/Independent High Authority for Elections

From The Core To The Fringe? The Political Role of Libyan Youth During And After The Revolution

Anna Lührmann

In 2011, Libyan youth activists – armed and unarmed – were at the core of the revolution and vigorously demanded the fall of the Gaddafi regime. Many harbored idealistic expectations for a rapid transformation of the country and immediate and genuine inclusion in political and economic processes. The first transitional elections took place in July 2012. It seems that the political representation of youth in Libya was higher during the revolution than in the formal institutions of the “New Libya”. How has the political participation of young Libyans evolved during and after the revolution? Youth political participation refers here to the meaningful and effective inclusion of relatively young people in the decision-making process. This broad youth definition includes anyone between 15 and 35. Youth political participation can be divided into consultative, youth-led or collaborative youth participation (Lührmann 2013: 16, based on Hart 1992, Landsdown 2010, Karkara 2011). In this paper, the main focus is on collaborative youth participation, which refers to young people being effectively included in regular political decision-making processes (e.g. as voters, as Members of Parliament (MPs), as members of political parties or advocacy groups).

In many countries, we can observe the following phenomena: Youth tend to be active on the streets, but continue to be marginalized in formal decision-making bodies. In transitional processes, significant frustration is likely to arise if youth are not included in new formal decision-making procedures. This might have a destabilizing effect on the democratization process and accelerate conflict dynamics. It is therefore important to understand barriers to the political participation of youth. Barriers can be found on various levels - individual, organizational and structural (UNDP 2008: 6). This approach will serve as the analytical framework for the second part of the paper. This paper draws on three field visits to Tripoli that included discussions with Libyan civil society representatives, MPs, civil servants as well as representatives of the international community.¹ The empirical analysis is enhanced with data from the 6th Wave of the World Value Survey. The conceptual framework draws from a recent publication on youth political participation on behalf of UNDP (Lührmann 2013). As of spring 2014, the political situation in Libya has become highly chaotic and all formal governance institutions are highly contested (Lacher 2014). Hence, this article addresses the revolutionary period in 2011 and the brief period of relative calm in post-Gaddafi Libya until the ouster of Prime Minister Ali Zeidan in March 2014.

Taking stock: Political participation of youth during and after the revolution in Libya

1. Revolutionary Period (February 2011 - July 2012)

Inspired by the fall of Ben Ali in Tunisia, a mostly young movement of Libyans started mobilizing for a “Day of Revolt” on February 17, protesting against the human rights violations of the Gadhafi regime (Lindgren 2013: 210). The arrest of a young human rights activist, Fathi Terbil, on February 15 further fueled protests.² The February 17 movement quickly spread throughout the country. Protests were met with severe repression and military action from the side of the regime. During the following civil

¹ 5-12 July 2012, 6-13 October 2012 and 25-29 January 2013.

² BBC Online, 16.2.11.

war, youth took vital roles in the armed militias, media and online activism as well as in humanitarian aid work.³ The Libyan Youth Movement and other young activists used social media for mobilization and self-organization. There are some indications that these activities played a vital role for the revolution. Lindgren shows in an in-depth analysis of tweets on 17 February how twitter helped activists to subvert Libya's restricted media landscape (Lindgren 2013). The majority of Libyans below 35 indicate in 2013 that they use the Internet daily.⁴ Hence, chances are high that online mobilization reached many youth in 2011. Facebook also provided a platform for the Libyan Youth Movement to share news and develop their political agenda (Sommer et al 2013). However, only a small fraction of Libyans seem to have used Facebook in 2010: 2,4 % according to The Guardian (2014). Additionally, the Libyan Youth Movement may have been highly relevant in the initial days of the uprising, but did not emerge as a leading actor in the revolutionary struggle. Hence, online and youth-led activities probably played a vital role in the early days of the Libyan revolution, but they also should not be overrated. Gaddafi did not fall because of twitter but because people took to the streets and because of the civil war and NATO's military intervention.

Already during the revolution, youth were sidelined in important decision-making bodies. In the main governance authority of the revolution and later of the first months of post-Gaddafi Libya – the National Transitional Council (NTC) – Fathi Terbil apparently was the only youth representative present (Murphy 2011). Elder men representing their cities and tribes seemed to dominate the NTC. Traditional non-state governance institutions, such as tribal leadership, are often based on seniority or lineage and hence tend not to encourage the inclusion of youth in political decision-making. After the liberation of Tripoli, an interim government under Abdurrahim El-Keib took office in November 2011. In his cabinet, the above-mentioned young human rights activist, Fathi Terbil, became Minister of Youth. After a brief discussion with him in Tripoli in October 2012, it remained unclear if and how he actually tried or managed to feed youth views in the interim government's decision-making.

2. First Transitional Elections and Their Aftermath (July 2012 - Nov 2012)

The first transitional election in Libya took place on July 7, 2012. 82% of all eligible voters registered and 62% of registered persons turned out to vote (EU EAT 2012: 14, 34). Apparently, "Libyans needed to vote."⁵ Local and international observers (Grifa 2012) consistently describe the atmosphere in Libya during the election day and shortly afterwards as "party time".⁶ Overall, the elections were perceived as a central achievement of the revolution.

On 8 August 2012, the General National Congress took over power from the National Transitional Council. Congress members had been elected in competitive, multi-party elections. There were several Members of Parliament below the age of 30. Particularly on women's and political party lists, young candidates had a chance. For example, Hana Jibril, a 26-year-old dentist from Misrata, served on the Budget Committee. However, the overall representation of the mostly young revolutionary fighters in the GNC was "weak" (Lacher 2013). The former revolutionary fighters still enjoyed a high

³ Der Tagespiegel, 14.10.12.

⁴ Data from the 6th wave of the World Value Survey (2013); Frequency of internet use as information source (Under 35/ Over 35): 50%/24% Daily; 11/9% Weekly; 6/5% Monthly; 4/5 % Less than monthly; 30/58% Never; Non-responses are excluded (3%).

⁵ Personal communication, Western diplomat, Tripoli 9.7.12

⁶ BBC News, 7.7.12.

degree of public trust and admiration, but were largely excluded from the official institutions of the “New Libya”.

3. Government of Ali Zeidan (November 2012 - March 2014)

Following the elections, it took the General National Congress until November 2012 to appoint a Prime Minister - Ali Zeidan - and to approve his cabinet.⁷ In Ali Zeidan’s cabinet, no minister was below 40 years old. The Minister for Youth and Sports, Abdulsalam Abdullah Guaila, was 45 years old when he took office.⁸ He left the cabinet together with other members of the Justice and Construction Party (Libyan Muslim Brotherhood) in January 2014.⁹ Little is known about his work. I was only able to find the following tweet about his ministry: “Was Stuck in traffic near sports + youth ministry #Libya. Youngest in or out at least 50 and if obesity is a sport they'd get the gold medal.” (@misrati_free on twitter; 30.8.13). Some civil society organisations (CSO) featuring youth leaders or youth issues were established during and after the revolution (Clément et al 2013). Nevertheless, elder men seem to dominate the political debates in post-revolutionary Libya, for example the Grand Mufti Sadeq Al-Ghariani (Lacher 2013).

Public Opinion

Regardless of this underrepresentation of youth and tremendous governance problems, such as the deteriorating security situation, the vast majority of young Libyans (64%) still seemed to believe that their revolution was “successful” in summer 2013. This is the finding of an opinion poll conducted by the Al Jazeera Centre for Studies in April/Mai 2013.¹⁰ According to this poll, only 24% of Libyan youth think that their country needs a “revision of leadership.” Likewise, only 11% of young Libyans are reported to believe that the elections were not free and fair as opposed to 38% of Egyptians. According to this poll, the motives for revolution also differ in the three North African countries. In Libya, most respondents cite civil and political rights, whereas in Tunisia dignity and economic conditions were on the minds of youth. In Egypt, corruption was the main concern reported.¹¹

The recent wave of the World Value Survey, conducted in Libya in 2013, with a total of 2131 respondents, allows further insights into Libyan public opinion in this crucial phase of Libya’s history (WVS). About half of the respondents are below 35 years (45%). 38% of young respondents state they have attended peaceful demonstrations as opposed to 26% of respondents above 35 (see Figure 1). This resonates with the picture of a “youth revolt.” The data also reflects the recent wave of political activism in Libya. The 6th Wave of the World Values Survey (WVS) records attitudes for 39 different countries on the question of participation in political demonstrations. Among all countries, Libya is the country with the highest share of respondents claiming they have attended a peaceful demonstration in the past. On average across the world, 12% of respondents claim to have attended peaceful demonstrations compared to 30% in Libya.

⁷ Libya Herald, 3.11.12.

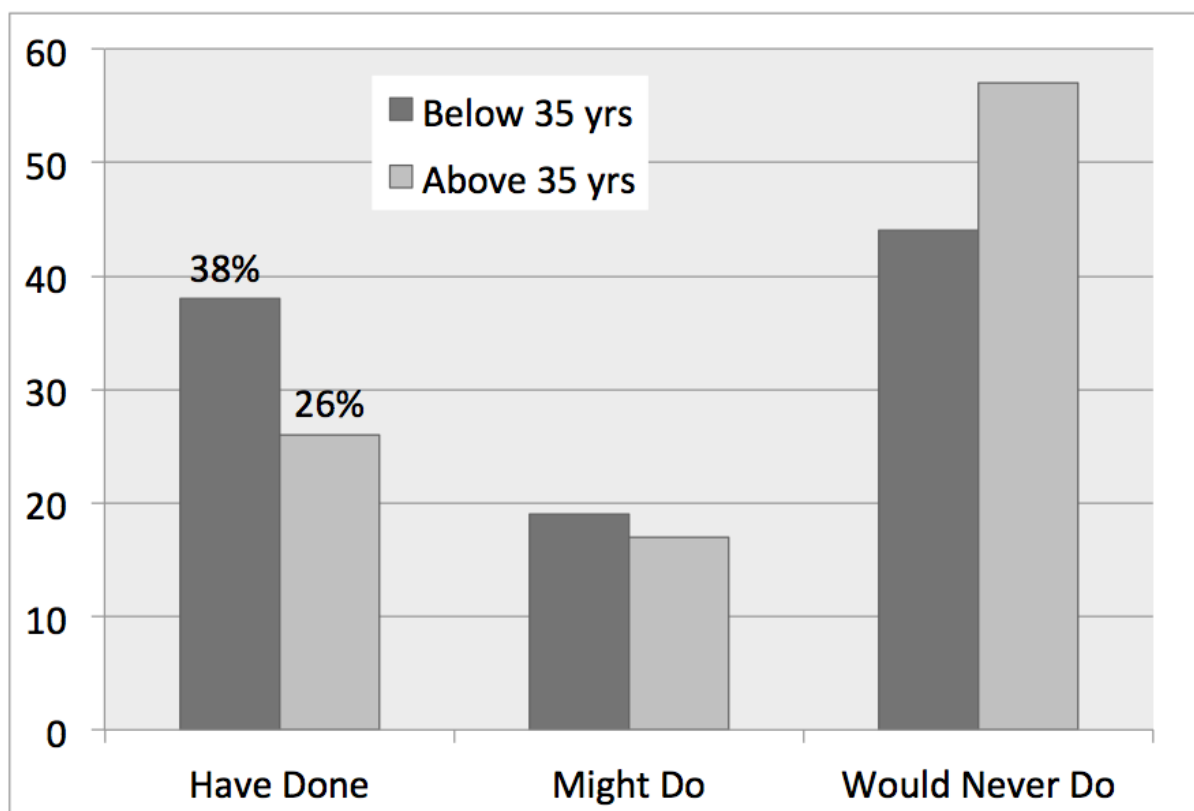
⁸ Libya Herald, 3.11.12.

⁹ Al Ahram, 21.1.14.

¹⁰ AJE, 30.7.13.

¹¹ AJE, 30.7.13.

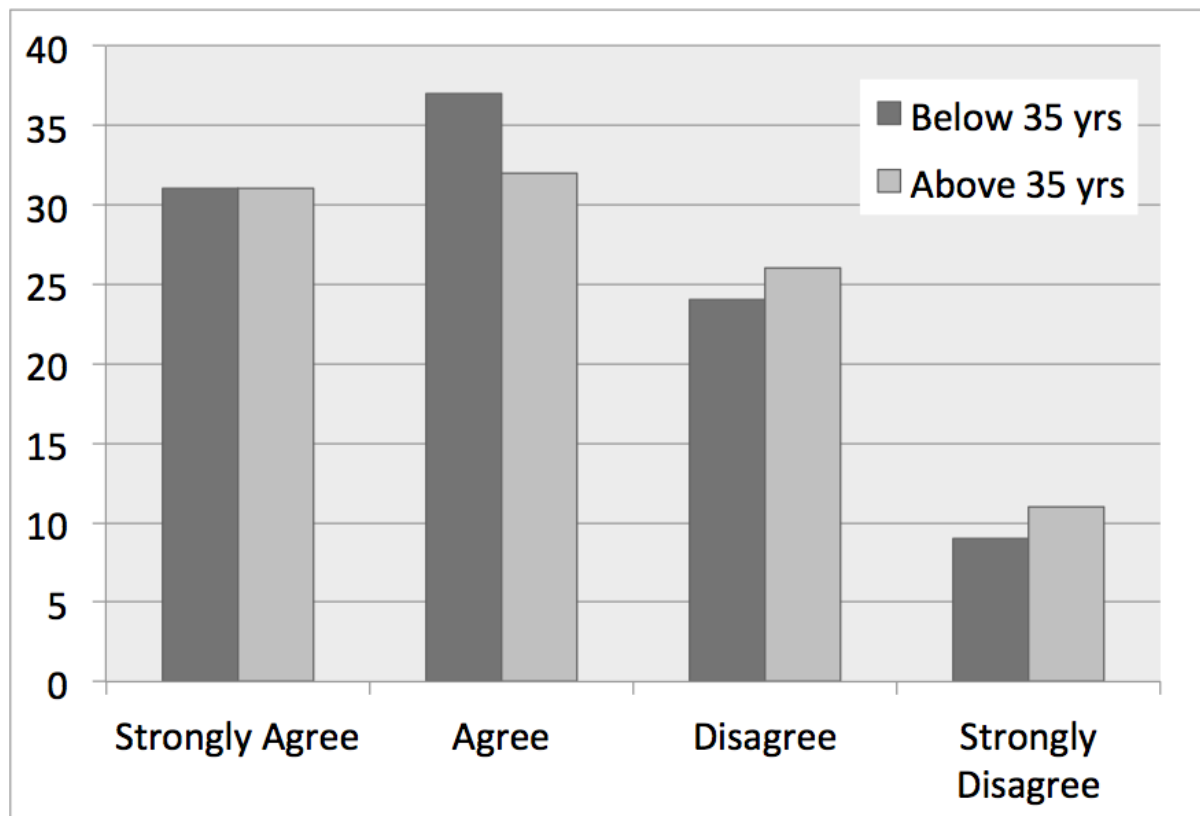
Figure 1: Attitudes towards Attending Peaceful Political Demonstrations in Libya 2013 (WVS)



Source: Own illustration based on data from 6th Wave of World Value Survey (N=2, 131). The survey participants declining to answer this question are not included here (3%; "Don't know" or "No answer").

The World Value Survey also provides some indications about the societal position of youth. On the one hand, 62% of respondents state that most people in Libya would place people in their 20s at a rather low position in society. Correspondingly, 61% would place people in their 40s at a relatively high position. This suggests that there might be a cultural barrier to a higher participation of youth in politics. On the other hand, 69% of respondents state that most people in Libya would accept it if a "suitably qualified 30 year old" was appointed as their boss. Similarly, 65% agree or strongly agree that "old people have too much political influence" (Figure 2). The age group of respondents does not matter for the response rates described in this paragraph. These findings suggest that Libyan society might be willing to accept more youth political leadership in the future, even though they describe the current societal position of youth as relatively low.

Figure 2: "Old People Have too Much Political Power" (WVS Libya 2013)



Source: Own illustration based on data from 6th Wave of World Value Survey (N=2,131). The survey participants declining to answer to this question are not included here (9%; "Don't know" or "No answer").

Youth marginalization in post-Gaddafi Libya: Reasons and Ways Ahead

Based on the empirical findings, the initial thesis – political representation of youth in Libya was higher during the revolution than after - needs to be modified. Youth representation during the revolutionary period and after the election was actually quite similar. Both during and after the revolution, the important role that youth played in the streets and in the militias was not translated into important roles in more formal decision-making bodies. What are the reasons behind this misbalance? In many other countries, we can observe similar phenomena. Youth are active in the streets and continue to be marginalized in formal decision-making bodies (Ellis 2007, Golombeck 2002, MacKinnon et al 2007). Barriers to youth political participation may be found on three levels: individual, organizational and structural (UNDP 2008:6).

The level of *individual capacity* is a starting point for explanation. The mere presence of youth in formal institutions (e.g. as MPs) is not enough. Rather, elected representatives need the capacities and skills to effectively participate in the decision-making process. Here, young people can often be sidelined if they lack knowledge or technical skills to participate meaningfully. However, in Libya in 2012 this point should not have been relevant, as all MPs were new to their job. Youth representatives also have the advantage that they were not involved in high ranks of the Gaddafi regime and hence may have a higher credibility. Therefore it is actually surprising that the Libyan

interim authorities did not tap into the fresh resource of young personnel more often. During the transition process in Eastern Europe, young technocrats quickly rose to become ministers in the 1990s. Particularly in the light of Libya's Integrity Law, the Eastern European experience might be an interesting inspiration for the Libyan case. The Integrity Law, passed in May 2013, excluded anyone with responsible positions under Gaddafi from political offices and hence decimated the pool of available political leadership personnel (Lacher 2014: 2). This opportunity to give young people more political responsibility was regrettably missed.

On the *organizational level*, functioning civil society organizations or political parties that may be intermediaries between the youth population and the political elites are lacking. There are some active youth civil society organizations (e.g. H2O), but their outreach to youth particularly outside of a narrow elite is doubtful. Instead, many young people continue to be organized in armed militias. With weapons in their hand they storm ministries and parliaments in order to fight for their demands – often successfully.¹² It will be critical for the “New Libya” to find a way to channel political grievances in peaceful and constructive deliberation processes. This would also foster the meaningful engagement of youth.

The restrained political role of youth might also be attributed to patriarchal social constraints in the societal environment, giving limited room to the equal participation of youth and women. The transition from childhood to adulthood in the MENA region is often characterized as period of “waithood.” Young men spend their most energetic years waiting for a job in order to be eligible for marriage. Due to persistent political and social exclusion, youth are left in a passive state (UNDP Egypt 2010). The revolution has not managed to break away all of these barriers. The analysis of the World Value Survey data suggests that young people still have a lower social status in Libya than people in their 40s. However, the survey data also shows that a vast majority of Libyans seems to believe that the older generation holds too much political power. This discontent might eventually lead to behavioral and social change, and allow for the inclusion of youth in the political process. Additionally, it has to be considered that Libyan society is deeply fragmented into numerous groups – tribal, religious, regional (Lacher 2013). It is probably safe to assume that for many youth the similarities with other, older people from their alliance are higher than with other youth from opposing (political) groups. In other words, factors other than age might matter more for political identity and societal cleavages.

Conclusion

Compared to their vital role during the revolution, the inclusion of youth in formal decision-making bodies in post-revolutionary Libya was meager. This can be attributed to various factors, mainly in the organizational and structural realm. In order to further shed light on this issue a comparison with neighboring Egypt might be fruitful. The solution to end youth exclusion from political processes does not lie in the capacities of individual youth alone. Political structures and processes have to change in order to include the voices of young people and their procedural preferences. In a nutshell, the socio-political environment, organizations and youth all have to change in order to move closer together. Unfortunately, many activities aimed at enhancing youth political participation target

¹² Libya Herald, 12.2.13.

individual capacities only and neglect the social and political environment. This is not enough to substantially enhance youth political participation.

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The Attractiveness of Political Islam for Youth in North Africa

Charlotte Biegler-König

Introduction

Following the fall of the Mubarak regime in February 2011, mass protests took place for over two years in Egypt. The protests intensified with the prohibition of the Muslim Brotherhood in September 2013 and their subsequent labelling as a ‘terrorist organisation’ on 25 December¹³. A striking feature of the rallies was the large number of young demonstrators and protesters. In particular, young people and students took to the streets after 25 January 2011: for the overthrow of president Mubarak, for new elections, secularism, for fewer Islamic Sharia laws in the Constitution, both for and against the new government, and against the military coup. At the centre of the Egyptian riots were young people demanding a future. They argued particularly controversially about the religious orientation of the Egyptian Constitution. It is important to note that religion did not play a role in the initial protests, and that it only became an issue after Mubarak’s fall. The same can be observed in Tunisia. The protests here were less violent, and political reforms were able to advance more steadily, but in the process of negotiating the new constitution, Islamic activists did also play an important role. Since the successful overthrow of former dictator Ben Ali, new freedom has been found, and the number of young people joining Islamist groups, in particular Salafists, increased drastically after the Tunisian revolution.

It is interesting, therefore, to examine how the younger generation understands ‘Islam’ as a political and/or social-religious role model. Why are Islamic parties and movements so attractive to North African youth? The focus of this article is youth in Egypt. But for reasons of diversity, the young generation in Tunisia will be considered for a comparison in various points. First, the term ‘political Islam’, which Salafism¹⁴ can also be assigned to (also referred to as Salafism?), needs to be clarified, as well as the meaning of ‘post-Islamism’. Following this, the situation of young people in Egypt and Tunisia will be explained in detail. The third part will provide a brief insight into the concept of identity formation. Based on the discussion of two political groups, the appeal of political Islam will be analysed as an identity-creating element and as a mobilising incentive.

Political Islam and Post-Islamism

The protests in Egypt since Mubarak’s fall suggest a divided society. Whereas demonstrations against Sharia law in the Constitution took place during Mursi’s presidency, following the banning of the Muslim Brotherhood, many took to the streets demonstrating in favour of its claim to power. Here, two different conceptions clash over the role of religion in the state. While many young people want a liberal constitution and see religion as a private affair, others feel it is the state’s duty to enforce religious law. These two opposing ideas are represented by the concepts of political Islam and Post-Islamism.

Political Islam, also known as ‘Islamism’, defines Islam not only as a religion but also as a guide for a specific social order and political system. A separation of religion and state is not wanted. On the

¹³ Zeit Online (2013): Ägypten stuft Muslimbrüder als Terrororganisation ein. URL: <http://www.zeit.de/politik/ausland/2013-12/aegypten-muslimbrueder-terror-organis-ation> (Stand 07.01.2014).

¹⁴ Salafism (Arabic السلفية) means ancestors, the ‘ancients’ or predecessors.

contrary: politics should take place within a religious context¹⁵. The starting point is the seventh century, the time of the Prophet Muhammad, when he not only promoted Islam, but also worked as a legislator and military leader. The Quran and the Hadiths ('traditions') written down by the tenth century jointly form the basis for Sharia law, which regulates both prayers and fasting as well as defining marriage, and family, inheritance and penal law. Moreover, Sharia specifies the situation of non-Muslims and describes Jihad as a means for expansion. Political Islam dictates all areas of life and thus provides a return to 'original Islam'.

This idea of a radical political Islam including the application of Sharia law and the practice of Jihad, however, dates back to the 20th century¹⁶. The first major Islamist movement was the Muslim Brotherhood founded in Egypt in 1928. The Muslim Brotherhood gained much ground. As a contrast to the poor governance of the authoritarian regime at the time, it advocated a political system focused closely on political Islam. The same applies to Islamic groups in Tunisia. The Ennahda party¹⁷ is ideologically close to the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood.

Salafism, in turn, preaches an extreme form of political Islam. The Salafist groups themselves do not constitute a homogeneous group, but cover a wide spectrum ranging from Salafist parties to charitable organisations, but also to radical individuals¹⁸. However, other than the more pragmatically oriented Muslim Brothers eager to take over the government, they share the same fundamental conviction of striving for and returning to the religious ideals according to the example of the Prophet Muhammad and the first generation of his followers.¹⁹

An alternative to the conventional definition of 'political Islam' is the definition of 'post-Islamism'²⁰. It is based on an understanding of Islam, which is compatible with modernity, i.e. the 7th century is no longer perceived as an element of a normative, or idealist model: "Post-Islamism is not anti-Islamic or secular; a post-Islamist movement dearly upholds religion but also highlights citizens' rights. It aspires to a pious society within a democratic state"²¹. In post-Islamism, Islam is associated with individualism, freedom and democracy. It describes a system in which all citizens, regardless of religion or gender, can find a home²². This system relegates religion to the private spheres of citizens. The state's laws should allow everyone to practise their faith without imposing a religious way of life.

¹⁵ Bayat, Asef (2007): Making Islam Democratic – Social Movements and the Post-Islamist Turn. Stanford: Stanford University Press. Political Islam adopts a highly critical attitude towards the concept of democracy. It conceives a fundamental dilemma in the relationship between man and God as denoted by the roots 'demos' and 'kratos': 'rule of the people', not 'reign of God'. Man writing his own law puts him in opposition to God. In: Murtaza, Muhammad Sameer (2011): Die ägyptische Muslimbruderschaft – Geschichte und Ideologie. Verlag rotation

¹⁶ Schirmacher, Christine (2011): Geistesgeschichtliche Ursprünge des Politischen Islam/Islamismus. In: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (Hsg.) 20.-22. Oktober 2011. Politischer Islam – Islamismus. Extremistische Islam-Varianten in der Diskussion. URL: <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/akademie/berlin/09185.pdf> (Stand 07.01.2014).

¹⁷ Ennahda (Arabic النهضة حركة) means 'rebirth'.

¹⁸ Marks, Monica (2013): Youth Politics and Tunisian Salafism: Understanding the Jihadi Current. In: Mediterranean Politics 18, Heft 1, pp.104-111.

¹⁹ The term 'umma' is of central importance. It describes the unity of the Muslim community. This means the unity of state and society, of state and religion, of religion and politics, of people and God. In Salafism and Islamism, the 'umma' is seen as an alternative model to the concept of the nation state as imported from the West. (Zapf/Klevesath 2012: 13-14)

²⁰ Bayat, Asef (2007): Making Islam Democratic – Social Movements and the Post-Islamist Turn. Stanford: Stanford University Press

²¹ Bayat, Asef (2011): The Post-Islamist Revolutions. What the Revolts in the Arab World mean. In: The Council on Foreign Relations (Hg.), Foreign Affairs. URL: <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/67812/asef-bayat/the-post-islamist-revolutions> (Stand 07.01.2014).

²² Bayat, Asef (2007): Making Islam Democratic – Social Movements and the Post-Islamist Turn. Stanford: Stanford University Press

The demands of many of the protesters from 25 January 2011 and subsequent rallies²³ can best be considered variants of post-Islamism since people wanted freedom of opinion and democracy – not the introduction of Sharia law.

The Situation of Youth

The term ‘youth’ describes a particular population stratum with its own particular living conditions. The individuals meant here are people between 15 and 35 years of age.²⁴ Similar to many parts of the Arab world, in Egypt and Tunisia this group accounts for a large proportion of the total population. Approximately 60 % of the entire population are under 30 years old²⁵. About 35 % of the Egyptian population are young adults between the ages of 15 and 35²⁶. This stratum has a high level of education: Approximately 43% of Egypt’s young people hold a university degree. In sharp contrast to this high rate of literacy and education are the career prospects: each year, there is a ratio of only 200,000 new jobs for 700,000 university graduates. An additional factor aggravating the labour market situation is the often poor quality of university teaching meaning that graduates frequently enter the labour market as unskilled job seekers²⁷.

This precarious education and labour market situation was also caused by restrictive and authoritarian policies. Young people were denied active participation in political decision-making processes, as well as the opportunity to express their concerns about the future. Accordingly, the amount of party affiliations and participation in the elections in 2005 and 2010 was very low among young Egyptian voters²⁸. The situation was similar in Tunisia. Until the first protests in late 2010, it had been unusual for young people to openly voice their opinion in the streets, outside their private spheres.

Egyptian and Tunisian youth had been a politically and socially (particularly concerning job prospects) marginalised group for a long time²⁹. They acquired their political socialisation through digital networking; as a consequence they learnt and understood a new and different kind of citizenship. This distinguishes them from the older generation, which obtained information mainly from domestic sources or a few private international contacts³⁰. This was also one of the key reasons why, in media coverage, we have chiefly seen young Egyptians and Tunisians expressing displeasure.

²³ Nowaira, Amira (2011): Egypt's Day of Rage goes on. Is the world watching? In: The Guardian. URL: <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2011/jan/27/egypt-protests-regime-citizens> (Stand 30.05.2014).

²⁴ Of course, there is not only one youth but many different groups summarised here under the term ‘youth’.

²⁵ Ali, Fatuma Ahmed/Hannah Muthoni Macharia (2013): Women, Youth, and the Egyptian Arab Spring. In: Peace Review - A Journal of Social Justice 25, Heft 3, pp. 359-366.

²⁶ Martini, J./D. Kaye/E. York (2012): The Muslim Brotherhood, Its Youth, and Implications for U.S. Engagement. Santa Monica: RAND Corporation.

²⁷ Ali, Fatuma Ahmed/Hannah Muthoni Macharia (2013): Women, Youth, and the Egyptian Arab Spring. In: Peace Review - A Journal of Social Justice 25, Heft 3, pp. 359-366

²⁸ In a 2008 survey, only 7.1% of the young Egyptians stated that they were members of a political party (Sika 2012: 193). The overall participation in the elections of 2005 was 23%, and in 2010 only 15%.

Sika, Nadine (2012): Youth Political Engagement in Egypt: From Abstention to Uprising. In: British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies 39, Heft 2, pp. 181-199

²⁹ Ali, Fatuma Ahmed/Hannah Muthoni Macharia (2013): Women, Youth, and the Egyptian Arab Spring. In: Peace Review - A Journal of Social Justice 25, Heft 3, pp. 359-366

³⁰ Herrera, Linda (2012): Youth and Citizenship in the Digital Age: A View from Egypt. In: Harvard Educational Review 82, Heft 3, pp. 333-352.

Political Islam as an Identification Model

Why do religious or political concepts seem so attractive? In the centre of this attraction is the question of identity³¹. The term identity includes identifying oneself with something. Identification with something happens on a mental or spiritual level. Here, models are accepted or rejected, religious or similar intellectual beliefs are adopted, and values and impressions checked in order to create one's own identity within a collective³². The concept of identity consists of two levels of meaning: "Who am I?" and "What am I?".³³

The first question analyses the mental structure of individuals with their individual characteristics and capabilities. The individual person forms their social identities in the interaction process with their social surroundings and so develop an understanding of their own positions within social structures and in relation to others. They assign features to themselves and their social environment and thus create reference groups to identify with. Thus they develop a social identity which places an emphasis on the question "What am I?"

The question "What am I?" is aimed at the individual aspects of a qualitative partial identity, with which human collectives can identify. It is in the collective processing of these partial identities that group identities can define themselves in contrast to other groups. The definition of the 'other' is essential to the creation of one's own collective identity, as it determines who is a member of the group and who is not. Due to the self-definition of the collective and its external borders, supposed similarities are emotionalised and become obligations within the group while other groups can be identified as threats on the basis of social comparison processes³⁴. Against this background, the 'other' of political Islam in terms of its political, moral and religious views can be defined as other religions and *Weltanschauungen*.

In the following sections, youthful commitment before and after the upheavals of 2011 will be examined and set into the context of the previously discussed concepts of political Islam and Post-Islamism. Here, the concept of identity is used as an analytical approach on the basis of which the motivation of young people for religious involvement will be explained.

Young People in the Muslim Brotherhood

An important factor of young people's involvement in religious organisations is the authoritarian leadership style of previous decades. This experience helped the Egyptian Muslim Brothers to become the largest opposition movement. Founded in 1928, the Muslim Brotherhood was from a very early stage in opposition to the military regime in Egypt, established since the 1950s. Therefore,

³¹ An alternative approach which is mainly used in migration research involves the division into 'push factors' detaching young people from their familiar social environments (economic, social and political marginalisation), and 'pull factors' attracting young people to Salafist groups (charity work, financial aid, social recognition) In: Lee, Everett S. (1966): A Theory of Migration. In: Demography 5, Heft 1, pp. 47–57.

³² Körner, Katharina (2009): Identitätsstiftung durch den Europäischen Verfassungsvertrag (Schriften zum Europäischen Recht; 146). Berlin: Duncker & Humboldt, p.34

³³ Kretschmann, Carsten/Liermann, Christiane (2007): Identitäten in Europa – Europäische Identität. Anmerkungen zu einem kontroversen Begriff. In: Belafi, Matthias/Krienke, Markus (Hg.). Identitäten in Europa – Europäische Identität. Wiesbaden: Deutsche Universitätsverlag, pp. 9-16.

³⁴ Körner, Katharina (2009): Identitätsstiftung durch den Europäischen Verfassungsvertrag (Schriften zum Europäischen Recht; 146). Berlin: Duncker & Humboldt.

it soon became the target of state repression³⁵. Accordingly, the elder, still active leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood (some elected for life) were socialised by decades of persecution, imprisonment, torture and oppression. As a result, these generations saw in the military regime the identity-constituent 'other'. More and more, they came to identify with a traditional, conservative Islam and to define political Islam as a guideline for organised action³⁶. At the same time, the long persecution led to a legitimisation boost for the Muslim Brothers among young people: "Imprisonment thus enhanced the moral authority of the former prisoners"³⁷. The political Islam of the Muslim Brotherhood was thus a symbol of the resistance of many years; it was deemed legitimate, against an illegitimate and brutal system offering no future prospects to young people.

The situation is different with the Salafist groups in Tunisia. They equally draw their legitimacy from long-term opposition to the former regime, but also from their opposition to the religious Ennahda party after the protests. Ennahda, according to one teenager's reproach, "is negotiating with people who tortured our fathers"³⁸. In addition, many religious youngsters believe Ennahda to be cooperating with Western forces and therefore not able to integrate Sharia law into the new Tunisian constitution. A 24-year old Salafist laments: "I don't see what makes them so Islamic. They use lies to manipulate the people just like any party"³⁹.

Another item contributing to the attractiveness of the Muslim Brotherhood as a long-standing, long-suffering and relevant opposition is the fact that they make young people feel supported and appreciated. Today, the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood has about 600,000 - 700,000 members. On the assumption that the Muslim Brothers represent a cross-section of the total population, the proportion of the young people can be estimated at about 35%⁴⁰. The Muslim Brotherhood is very well interconnected and organised. A special importance lies in the universities as places of recruitment. The Muslim Brothers approach young people at an age when they are open to new ideas, when they strive for independence and to define their personalities. In short, they are in a phase of their lives in which they intensely tackle the important issues of identity: who and what they are. Belonging to the collective identity of a religious group takes on a central importance in a partial identity of the youngsters. In this situation, the Muslim Brotherhood succeeds in presenting itself as an open and flexible welfare association providing opportunities for participation and a sense of belonging. It also provides various social services: from religious study groups and social activities, through affordable study materials and excursions, to financial support. At the universities, the Muslim Brotherhood is seen as an organisation that encouraged active participation and mobilised opposition against government control even before 2011. This includes the allocation of active tasks at rallies and elections. Young people assume such tasks as distributing food, safeguarding large

³⁵ Pioppi, Daniela (2013): Playing with Fire - The Muslim Brotherhood and the Egyptian Leviathan. In: The International Spectator - Italian Journal of International Affairs 48, Heft 4, pp. 51-68.

³⁶ Martini, J./D. Kaye/E. York (2012): The Muslim Brotherhood, Its Youth, and Implications for U.S. Engagement. Santa Monica: RAND Corporation.

³⁷ Huntington, Samuel P. (1991): How Countries Democratize. In: Political Science Quarterly 106, Heft 4, pp. 614.

³⁸ Wolf, Anne (2013): Salafists challenge Ennahda for allegiance of youth in Tunisia. In: The National, May 12. URL: <http://www.thenational.ae/thenationalconversation/comment/salafists-challenge-ennahda-for-allegiance-of-youth-in-tunisia> (Stand 01.11.2014).

³⁹ Marks, Monica (2013): Youth Politics and Tunisian Salafism: Understanding the Jihadi Current. In: Mediterranean Politics 18, Heft 1, pp.108.

⁴⁰ Martini, J./D. Kaye/E. York (2012): The Muslim Brotherhood, Its Youth, and Implications for U.S. Engagement. Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, pp.9.

crowds, cleaning up public places, in short: welfare tasks. This way, it does not only appeal to conservative-religious students, but it also targets those of different ideological backgrounds⁴¹. Many students therefore identify with the organisation.

Similarly small reservations with regard to the Salafist movements can also be detected among Tunisian youth. Apart from online networks and mosques, the neighbourhood cafes mainly provide young people with the opportunity of an informal first encounter with the ideologies of the Salafists. A young Salafist described such a meeting: "We always do our preaching in the local dialect, far from the language of politicians. We are simple people and we address simple people in our sermons [...] During our sermons, people also had fun"⁴². The Islamic organisations give young people the feeling of being part of a collective identity and belonging to a community of shared values and solidarity, which they often miss in their social, economic and political environment.

However, this strength of the Muslim Brotherhood is also its weakness. During their university years, students get to know the organisation in a very open and inviting way. Yet, outside the university, the Muslim Brotherhood has the same problems as many other organisations and political parties: obsolescence. Until 2010, all its presidents were from the 1920s cohort⁴³. A strict hierarchy based on leadership and obedience prevents young people from actively participating in decision-making⁴⁴.

The situation is different with the Tunisian Salafists. Young people are an important part of Salafist groups and networks. Through their many contacts, who also attract new members, they distribute leaflets and Salafi literature, support the charities of the Salafists and protest publicly against infringements of religious taboos⁴⁵. The youngsters also distance themselves visibly from the secular Tunisian society and so become the flagship of the Salafist movement. Men grow beards and often wear a kamis (long shirt from Afghanistan), young women usually wear a jilbab (full body garment) and / or niqab (black face veil)⁴⁶. Wearing these religious symbols can also be understood as a conscious rebellion against the autocratic regime. Since these symbols were frowned upon or banned under Ben Ali, they are now important items of the young Salafists' identity⁴⁷.

The generation conflict in the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood had led to the separation of the Al-Wasat political party in the 1990s and in 2011 it caused the elimination of the Egyptian Current Party. Both parties spoke out against mixing religious missions and political objectives. Al-Wasat brought about a controversy within the Muslim Brotherhood, with the result that the Muslim Brotherhood has slightly liberalised in recent years (e.g. in admission of female staff). The Egyptian Current Party, however, was founded by disillusioned young Muslim Brothers feeling deprived of their revolutionary victory. In fact, the Muslim Brotherhood remained together until Mubarak's fall. The Egyptian

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Merone, Fabio (2013): Salafism in Tunisia: An Interview with a Member of Ansar al-Sharia. In: Jadaliyya, April 11. URL: http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/11166/salafism-in-tunisia_an-interview-with-a-member-of- (Stand 01.11.2014).

⁴³ Murtaza, Muhammad Sameer (2011): Die ägyptische Muslimbruderschaft – Geschichte und Ideologie. Verlag rotation.

⁴⁴ Pioppi, Daniela (2013): Playing with Fire - The Muslim Brotherhood and the Egyptian Leviathan. In: The International Spectator - Italian Journal of International Affairs 48, Heft 4, pp. 51-68.

⁴⁵ Marks, Monica (2013): Youth Politics and Tunisian Salafism: Understanding the Jihadi Current. In: Mediterranean Politics 18, Heft 1, pp.104-111.

⁴⁶ Malka, Haim / William Lawrence (2013): Jihadi-Salafism's Next Generation. In: CSOS Analysis Paper, October 2013.

⁴⁷ Marks, Monica (2013): Youth Politics and Tunisian Salafism: Understanding the Jihadi Current. In: Mediterranean Politics 18, Heft 1, pp.104-111.

Current Party focuses on a rather post-Islamist agenda. This means that they advocate more equality between the sexes, freedom of religion, emancipation of the young generation (the average age being 31), and democratic processes inside and outside the party⁴⁸. Thus, Islam is still a factor creating identity, but is not considered an integral part of the public and political arenas.

This results in different impressions of why young people perceive Islam and political Islam as attractive⁴⁹. The Muslim Brotherhood and the Salafists hold several advantages. On the one hand, they have collected a wealth of experience and expertise over the years, resulting in impressive mobilisation options. Secondly, their definition of the identity-constituent 'other' is a simple one: it provides an identity beyond Western notions. Thus, they offer identity references concerning the political mainstream which young Egyptians and Tunisians can call their 'own' without fear of being subjected to an imperial or hegemonic foreign power. Political Islam - in all its characteristics - can therefore be attractive to a youth striving for independence.

However, a large proportion of the young people equally aspire to freedom and participation rights that political Islam, such as it is practiced by the Muslim Brotherhood, cannot offer. Parties such as the Egyptian Current, therefore, are gaining a lot of sympathy (although their influence should not be overestimated). However, they must also deal with the constant suspicion of being influenced by the West. A weakness is that the identity-constituent 'other' is based on Western religious ideas and refuses the lack of freedom, in a Western sense, such as the way of living according to religious doctrines that is prescribed by the state. Another practical weakness lies in the few available resources and the limited mobility potential due to its small membership. Especially the latter may prevent people from leaving the Muslim Brotherhood and joining smaller, more liberal groups. All in all, it is worth noting that the proportion of young people in the Muslim Brotherhood, as mentioned above, only amounts to approximately 35 % (about 200,000 - 300,000 members) out of a total young population of about 30 million (35% of the total population). Both the Egyptian Current and Al-Wasat parties have small memberships⁵⁰. The influence of Islamic parties on Egyptian youth should not be generalised.

Conclusion

'Islam' serves as an identity-creating element for self-confident youth. It is possible to differentiate between the attraction posed by political Islam (including Salafism) and that of post-Islamism. The former provides a lot of expertise by the Muslim Brotherhood and several Salafist groups, as well as functioning structures and a large mobilisation potential. In Egypt and Tunisia, the latter offers participation and representation options on the basis of a modern understanding of religion and politics. Both have in common that they constitute an opposition to the values of the old regime,

⁴⁸ Martini, J./D. Kaye/E. York (2012): *The Muslim Brotherhood, Its Youth, and Implications for U.S. Engagement*. Santa Monica: RAND Corporation

⁴⁹ Martini, J./D. Kaye/E. York (2012): *The Muslim Brotherhood, Its Youth, and Implications for U.S. Engagement*. Santa Monica: RAND Corporation.; Pioppi, Daniela (2013): *Playing with Fire - The Muslim Brotherhood and the Egyptian Leviathan*. In: *The International Spectator - Italian Journal of International Affairs* 48, Heft 4, pp. 51-68.; Kucinskas, Jaime (2010): *A Research Note on Islam and Gender Egalitarianism: An Examination of Egyptian and Saudi Arabian Youth Attitudes*. In: *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 49, Heft 4, pp. 761-770.; Popa, Eugenia Laura (2011): *Knowing the Other. Cultural and Religious Identity in Islam – "Knowing the Other. Cultural and Religious Identity in Islam"*. In: *Scientific Annals of the Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași* 2011, Heft 6, pp. 120-129.

⁵⁰ On 01 October 2014, the Egyptian Current Party merged with the party Strong Egypt. The amount of members is at approximately 500. Al-Wasat Party has about 5,000 members.

either by the long years of resistance or by the demand for civil rights in Tahrir Square. Islam itself serves both movements in different ways as a basis of legitimation and identification beyond western ideals, and is therefore attractive to the young. This trend is expected to continue in the future because the military coup against the Mursi government in Egypt in 2013 and the adoption of a very secular constitution by referendum with an impressive 98.1 % of voters suggest a return to the old status quo⁵¹. Although the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood has various organisational problems, it may now be strengthened as a symbol of resistance against the new regime after the military coup of 2013. Through the renewed oppression, their attractiveness to marginalised youth may still increase, whilst more moderate parties, such as Egyptian Current, could lose their legitimacy through cooperation with the new regime. The attractiveness of a radicalised political Islam could thus grow among Egyptian youth.

In another way, this also applies to a minority of youth in Tunisia. The Salafists offer these young people the opportunity to be heard and become part of a large Muslim collective identity. This is becoming more important by the fact that political forces – especially the Ennahda party, which had been actively involved in the overthrow of Ben Ali – have so far barely been able to revoke the economic, social and political marginalisation of the young. The Salafist groups with their clear rules and strict ideology give young people security in a chaotic world.

Political-religious groups win their appeal by the economic, social and political marginalisation of youth. In both countries, the political-religious groups are divided into different lines: moderate and radical ones, those adapted to the political and social rules and those that are in radical opposition. It is noteworthy that all groups benefit from the fact that the previous authoritarian regime represented a radical secularism. This enforced the need for legitimisation upon secular parties. Young people in both countries believe that political Islam provides the possibility of an alternative lifestyle

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⁵¹ ZEIT Online (2011): Die islamische Demokratie. Online verfügbar: <http://www.zeit.de/2011/09/P-Scharia> (Stand 07.01.2014).

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The Role of Artistic Protest Movements in the Egyptian Revolution

Daniel Farrell

Introduction

The purpose of this article is to argue that artistic protest movements have had a significant impact on the unfolding of the dramatic political events that have taken place in Egypt over the past four years. Like all revolutions, the Egyptian revolution has been far from simple and has been influenced by a broad and complex range of factors. It will be argued here that artists of various kinds, many of them very young, have played a central and important role in shaping and communicating the demands of the protestors and in helping to drive the revolution forward. They have enabled people to discuss and debate political issues openly and have provided new mediums for people to express their opinions more freely. Artists' groups and collectives have been influential in bringing people together to co-operate and collaborate – thus increasing their impact on the course of the revolution – and in encouraging people who have never been active in politics before to find their voices. As Ursula Lindsey asserts: 'What Egyptians call the January 25 Revolution has undoubtedly ushered in a new sense of freedom, as well as a determination to use public space to congregate and connect, and to demonstrate support for the uprising through cultural activism' (2012).

Many different forms of artistic protest movement have taken part in the revolution, from rap music to street theatre to poetry, and they have each played a role in influencing it, often in collaboration with each other at cultural festivals, such as the Al-Fann Midan ('Art is a Square') festival in Cairo. This essay will examine the actions of young graffiti and street artists in the events of the revolution as a case study – focusing in particular on their role in encouraging young people to play an active part in it – in order to demonstrate the broader influence of artistic protest movements on political developments in Egypt since 2011.

Graffiti was, of course, not invented on Tahrir Square in January 2011, but has always existed as a way for people to express political opinions and can, to a certain extent, be considered as a barometer of public opinion. According to Chaffee: 'Graffiti writing is one of the easiest and most efficient ways for individuals and opposing groups to register political dissidence, express social alienation, propagate anti-system ideas, and establish an alternative collective memory' (1999, p. 127; cited in Findlay, 2012, p. 178). In particular, graffiti is a medium often used by disaffected young people who have little or no access to mainstream political channels. Much has been written about the submissive and inactive political position of young people in Egypt before the revolution and their virtual absence from the political decision-making process (Floris, 2012).

Indeed, the 2010 UN Development Programme report on the state of young people in Egypt found that those in the 18-29 age group were the least likely to engage in political activity. It also found that many young people felt they were being openly discouraged from taking an active role in politics at all, being encouraged instead to focus their energies on private concerns (UNDP, 2010, pp. 105-10). According to Makar, this created a false impression that young Egyptians were apathetic and politically unaware, a viewpoint she argues is contradicted by the leading roles taken by young people, including many young street and graffiti artists, in the revolution (2011, p. 311). Murphy has posited that 'the street' became the gathering place of choice for a generation of young people

frustrated by their exclusion from their country's traditional political structures and the system's refusal to reform or modernise to meet the needs of the population in the twenty-first century (2012, p. 11).

Thus, younger artists employed the ancient art of graffiti to express their opinions, speaking to a whole new generation of political activists who went on to play a central role in the revolution. The following sections will argue that graffiti has influenced the unfolding of political events in Egypt since 2011 in three main ways: firstly, as a means of spreading information and new ideas among the population; secondly, as a means of facilitating people in coming together to work collaboratively; and thirdly, as a medium for people to express themselves freely and to encourage more and more people, especially those from the so-called 'lost generation' of disillusioned youth, to play an active role in politics.

Spreading Information and Ideas

Grffiti played an important role in disseminating ideas and information among the public as the revolution unfolded. Before 2011, graffiti was a very rare sight in Egypt, with artists and society at large under constant threat of suppression by the government and its agents. However, with the outbreak of the revolution, graffiti began appearing all over Cairo, with the walls of the city turning into a canvas for the people to express their political demands and seek to spread new ideas among the population. Speaking in 2012, artist Abou Al Naga claimed that the graffiti across Cairo acted as a mirror reflecting what the country had experienced over the previous year (Mahmoud, 2012).

Works depicting and condemning the atrocities committed by the authorities served both as a form of protest and as a catalyst, mobilising people to continue the uprising against the government. The creation of portraits of those killed in the protests and at the hands of the police served both to commemorate those who had died for the cause of the revolution and to attack the regime for its actions (Elkamel, 2012). Thus, according to Kamran Rosen, graffiti, which has always been a highly controversial form of art, became much more than that; it became a type of war paint in the fight against the regime (2013).

As well as communicating the ideas of the protestors, graffiti also fulfilled a practical role in informing people of protests and rallies. For example, in the days leading up to 25 January 2011, one of the most important days of protest in the revolution, graffiti all over the city called for people to come out on that day and take part in the protests. Later on, as frustration with the slow pace of change following the resignation of President Mubarak grew, notices about further days of protest were carried across the city in the form of graffiti (The Real News, 2012). These sought to remind people that the revolution was not over, encouraging citizens to continue the struggle for reform and change. The works of graffiti made reference to what had been accomplished thus far, demonstrating to young people in particular that their actions had brought results, but also stressing the need to continue in order to consolidate what had been achieved and bring about lasting change. As well as spreading new ideas, graffiti and street art also provided a medium for people to come together and co-operate, as will be discussed in the next section.

Organisation and Collaboration

Artistic protest movements have played an important role in organising groups of people to work together, something that is vital to the success of any such protest action. Many artists' collectives have been set up, enabling artists of various kinds to come together and to collaborate on larger works in order to spread support for the revolution. One of the largest of these, the Revolution Artists' Union was founded by a diverse group of writers, poets, photographers, singers, filmmakers, painters and many more on Tahrir Square in January 2011 at the height of the revolution. They wanted to work together and support one another in using their art as a medium to promote the political ideas of the revolution (Ibid.).

Young graffiti artists have been central to these movements and many have organised the creation of large collaborative works of graffiti, some of which have become symbols of the revolution itself. For example, groups of street artists worked with traditional Arabic calligraphists to paint slogans throughout the city. One such work with the phrase 'I Love my Country' made into the shape of a heart signified for many the aims of the protestors and was printed on t-shirts worn by some who took part in the revolution.

In one co-ordinated event in May 2011 that garnered huge publicity, a group of graffiti artists stormed the headquarters of the Interior Ministry and covered it with portraits of protestor Khalid Said on the first anniversary of his death at the hands of police (Ibid.). These events demonstrate not only the importance of involving as many people in the revolution as possible, but also the significance that large organised events can have on shaping public opinion. In these cases, the graffiti artists were able to channel the feelings and emotions held by many people and use them to further the aims of the revolution. In March 2014, following international protests, two policemen, Awad Saleh and Mahmoud Ghazala, were found guilty of torturing Khalid Said to death, with both being sentenced to ten years in prison (Ahram Online 2014).

Another major collaborative event organised by young graffiti artists and which sought to encourage involvement in the revolution was the so-called 'Mad Graffiti Weekend' that took also place in May 2011. Initiated by Aida al-Kashef and 'Ganzeer', a multi-disciplinary artist who came to international attention during the revolution, the weekend was a direct response to the attempts being made by the authorities to cover up or remove the portraits of those who had died in the revolution. Seeing this as a form of censorship, the artists resolved to organise a special weekend during which they would create a large series of works across the city. Aida al-Kashef claimed that he and many others who were bothered by the censorship taking place felt they had to take action and re-cover the walls of the city with graffiti (Egypt Independent, 2011).

Groups of volunteers co-ordinated the activities of the artists, spreading the word over Twitter and creating a Google Map detailing the location of each work throughout the city (Ganzeer, 2011). This action led to the creation of one of the best-known works of graffiti from the Egyptian revolution, the image of a tank facing down a bread seller on his bike, which was painted by a large group of artists. Here, Ganzeer claimed, the artists were acting to defy openly the censorship being imposed on them in an effort to ensure that the streets of Egypt belong to the people and not the government (Ibid.). Artist Omar Mustafa who had painted a portrait of Amr al-Beheiri, a political activist who had been

arrested in February 2011 and sentenced to five years in prison by a military tribunal, repainted the portrait over Mad Graffiti Weekend. He said: 'I have repainted Amr's portrait, using a larger stencil this time', claiming he would continue to use the portrait as an 'awareness-raising icon against the injustices of military courts' (Egypt Independent, 2011).

As in many other aspects of the revolution, it was young artists who were to the forefront of this process and their participation encouraged other young people to get involved. One the most high-profile of these is Ganzeer, who helped to organise the Mad Graffiti Weekend and who participated in the creation of the mural of the bread seller facing down the tank referred to above. In fact, he became so well known and associated with the revolution that he was denounced on Egyptian television by broadcaster Osama Kamal in May 2014 and was forced to leave Egypt (Pollack, 2014). Large organised events like the Mad Graffiti Weekend helped to facilitate people in playing a role in the revolution by providing them with an opportunity to take part in a political activity. In this way, the young graffiti and street artists helped other young Egyptians to find their voices and provided a means for them to express their opinions and hopes for the future, as will be discussed below.

Free Expression and Involvement

The third main way in which graffiti – and artistic protest movements in general – has influenced the Egyptian revolution has been its role in providing forums for people to discuss and debate political issues openly and to express their opinions freely. This is arguably the most important function it has had in a society in which creativity and the free articulation of ideas were so heavily restricted for so long. The freeing of artistic expression in the revolution has been symbolic of the overall process of the liberation of Egyptian society from the grip of an authoritarian regime. The artistic protest movements have thus provided mediums for people to channel their thoughts, feelings and opinions about the political situation in their country and to communicate them openly for the first time.

The graffiti and other artists do not claim to have all the answers to the problems facing Egypt, but they have created forums for citizens of the country to come together and debate the issues in the hope of finding solutions. For example, 'Ganzeer' (a pseudonym meaning 'Bicycle Chain'), claims he goes by that name because he thinks of artists as a mechanism pushing change forward. He claims: 'We are not the driving force. We are not the people pedalling, but we connect ideas and by doing this we allow the thing to move' (Pollack, 2014). Indeed, critic and author Carlo McCormick has argued that Ganzeer and others like him are working more as activists than as artists (Ibid). With parts of the city essentially turned into open-air galleries, people have been confronted with new and different ideas as they go about their daily lives and they have the opportunity to discuss them with others gathered in public spaces. Indeed, the Revolution Artists' Union has roped off sections of wall across the city in order to allow graffiti artists to work and have people observe them (Themba Lewis Photography, 2014). Festivals such as the Al-Fann Midan mentioned above happen in the open as much as possible, inviting people to take part and interact with the subject matter in order to promote education on the issues and foster exchanges of views. They also work to ensure that the revolution is seen to be on-going process, the outcome of which can still be shaped and influenced by people, and not one that it over or whose conclusion has already been reached (Lindsey, 2012). The artistic protest movements have also allowed people who had never previously taken part in the political process to have their voices heard. The existence of alternative means of political activity

such as the graffiti and street art movements outside the traditional political channels has encouraged young people in particular to seek to play more of a role in the development of their country. In contrast to the closed nature of the pre-revolutionary political system, these artistic movements invite the public to take part as much as possible. Graffiti artists working on Tahrir Square have stressed that the inspiration behind their works has come not just from themselves, but also from speaking to people on the square and listening to their ideas. Some artists also referred to having conversations with people who could not read or write, people whose opinions are otherwise far less likely to be heard, and creating works based on these discussions (The Real News, 2012).

Conclusion

The revolution that has taken place in Egypt over the past three years has been influenced and affected by a large number of factors. One of these is undoubtedly the range of artistic protest movements that have sprung up throughout the country. These have included street theatre groups, writers, rappers and singers as well as the street and graffiti artists who have been the focus of this essay. These artists have benefitted greatly from the effect the revolution has had on weakening the censorship imposed on cultural expression in Egypt and on making Egyptian society more open to different thoughts and ideas on the future. In this sense, the artistic movements are both a cause and effect of the revolution, using the new sense of freedom and openness that resulted from it to drive forward the ideas of the protestors, shaping opinions and providing forums for debate, thus influencing the revolution itself.

Using graffiti and street art as a case study, this article has argued that the artistic protest movements have impacted on the events of the revolution in three main ways. Firstly, the artists have communicated the ideas of the protestors, spreading awareness of their demands among the population, as well as highlighting the atrocities committed by the regime. Much of the graffiti visible in Cairo has also had a practical function, informing people about protests and commemorating those who have died in the revolution. Secondly, the movements have worked to bring groups of people together to work towards a collective goal, a vital element in the success of such revolutions. This has helped to facilitate collaboration and co-operation by different groups of artists and has encouraged many people to take part in the protests.

Thirdly, the protest movements have provided forums and venues for people to express their opinions freely and openly, fostering discussion and debate among the population, particularly among many, such as young people, who have never been involved in politics before. The artists have also enabled the people of Egypt to channel their creativity at a time when the restrictions placed upon it by the authoritarian regime were being lifted. With the new regime of President al-Sisi, who came to power in 2013, and the military re-imposing many forms of censorship that had been lifted following the 2011 revolution, many young artists have continued to campaign and take part in public debates in order to ensure that the gains made then are not lost. Having played such a significant role during the revolution, artistic protest movements are continuing to fight for reform and a better future for Egypt.

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The „Gezi Generation“: Youth, Polarization and the „New Turkey“

Gözde Böcü

A Turkish Summer

The Democratic Republic of Turkey, founded by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in 1923, became a multi-party system in the 1950s. Since then, Turkish democracy has been struggling to consolidate itself, facing major military coups in 1960, 1971 and 1980 to re-establish the elitist republican order, and has been coping with ethnic and religious polarization since the 1980s (Demirel 2005). After a decade of unstable coalition governments in the 1990s, the Islamic conservative party AKP (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi) came to power and has been leading the country for more than ten years (Aran 2013). The controversy about the AKP's party program and probable Islamic tendencies started in the aftermath of the elections in 2002. The liberal and secular parts of society especially assumed a sort of hidden Islamist agenda (Kurt & Alyanak 2011). After ten years of AKP rule it has become evident that it is not the Islamic agenda or the anti-republican stance, but rather the autocratic tendencies which represent the real problem (Tisdall 2013). In the last ten years the oppressive policies of the government seem to have incensed Turkish society more than expected, and eventually led to the democratic protest movement which started in Gezi Park in June 2013.

Gezi Park is a rare green area in the heart of Istanbul. When the government decided to use the Gezi Park area to build another shopping mall for the city, the inhabitants of Istanbul protested against this top-down decision. When police used excessive violence against the peaceful environmental protestors in and around the park in order to clear it, a widespread resistance against the police and the governmental measures arose (Kilic 2013). Such a wide protest as the summer 2013 protest against the AKP government had never been seen before in the history of the Turkish Republic. Previous protests had mainly been organized by the secular elite and were not widely successful, because until 2007 the majority of the people stood behind the policies of the AKP, believing that it would continue the democratization process and bring an end to the series of military coups in Turkey (Atay 2013).

More than a year after the protest the popular question “Quo vadis Turkey?” remains valid. What does the dominance of AKP in Turkish politics mean to the Gezi Generation and how can the increasing polarization of Turkish society be stopped? What role will young people play in the future and will they be able to influence mainstream politics in Turkey? This paper aims to provide an understanding of recent developments in Turkey by looking at the causes of the protest and increasing polarization within society, focusing mainly on the role of youth.

The Gezi Spirit

The protest's famous slogan, which spread all around the world in June 2013, developed out of the area where it took place: Gezi Park in Istanbul's Beyoglu District, next to Taksim Place. All protestors identified with the slogan “Everywhere is Taksim, Everywhere is resistance” when police forces cleared the area around Gezi Park in Istanbul (Kilic 2013). The events occurred after some environmentalists protested against plans to build a grand shopping mall, destroying one of Istanbul's rare green spaces. Until that day activists had been holding peaceful protests in a space in Gezi Park (Atay 2013). The park was filled with the activists' tents. Everyday more and more creative

protestors offered readings, gatherings and concerts and even cleaned up the rubbish produced by the visitors (Catterall 2013). On May 31, the police responded harshly to the peaceful demonstrations, firing tear gas at the protestors and beating them. These violent acts by the Turkish police were widely condemned by other organizations and institutions, and by the Council of Europe (Europe 2013). Thanks to the widespread coverage on Facebook and Twitter, with pictures circulating all over the internet, the protest turned into a mass movement (Dorsey 2013). Within several days people had started to pay more attention to the protests and participated directly on the streets of Istanbul. The streets of Beyoglu, an area popular with tourists, became the main arena for the clashes between the police and the people. Within a short time, more than 3.5 million people all over Turkey had taken to the streets to protest against the Turkish government's harsh measures against the peaceful demonstrators, whose aims were to fight for more democratic freedom and civil rights and to stop the repressive policies of the government (Özel 2014). The high number of injuries and the deaths of some protestors strengthened the uprising and made even more people come together (Ete 2013). In the final count, anti-government mass protests took place in 79 of Turkey's 81 regions, demonstrating the extent of the movement (Seufert 2013).

The Gezi movement was not only remarkable in its intensity but also because of the composition of its participants. For the first time in Turkish history, nearly all oppositional groups united around the same issue: Leftist, Kemalist, nationalist, pacifist, gay, anti-capitalist religious, Kurdish and Alevite groups demonstrated side by side on the streets (Aydın 2013). Their main purpose was to show their dissatisfaction with the government. Surveys conducted prior to the protest showed that almost 50% of Turkish citizens felt their lifestyle and freedoms to be under attack, believing the AKP to be pursuing a conservative agenda (Paul/Seyrek 2013). Another survey showed that only 10% of the protestors in the Gezi Movement were protesting for environmental reasons. The majority were there because of the increasing authoritarian and interventionist style of the government (Can 2013). Moreover, the protesters published their demands saying that they did not accept the imposition of religious or moral values or norms on society, and that they wished for a more participatory decision-making system in the environment of a pluralist system that also respects the demands of minorities (Werz 2013). The underlying motivation for protesting was not about the park but rather about the wish to be heard by an increasingly deaf government.

Why now?

It is not the first time in Turkish history that the group in power has ignored and suppressed the other. Looking at the causes of the Gezi Park protests from only a short-term perspective would hide the real causes of the unsolved tensions in Turkish society. Therefore it is important to take a closer look at the long-term causes of the biggest protest movement in Turkish history.

One of these long-term causes was the increasing polarization in Turkish politics and society: Turkish Society had faced polarization ever since the early years of the republic. Long before the conservative AKP-government came to power, Turkey struggled with increasing tension between different societal groups. When Atatürk and the state founders abolished the Caliphate and Sultanate in 1924, religious fraternities were banned and the secularist nation builders took over control of the state. Meanwhile, conservative parts of society, especially in rural areas remained unconvinced by the Kemalists calling on them to adopt a secular and western lifestyle. Over the decades, the unheard

voice of the Islamist and conservative parts of society turned into a huge political power source and into an opposing power base against the Kemalist set of ideas. The comeback of the Islamic social set of ideas started in the post-1980 military coup era, when conservative Turkish nationalism gained influence and the AKP consequently came to power in 2002 (Öncü 2014).

Some therefore argue that one major reason why the Gezi protest occurred was the long known struggle for power over the state and society between the secular and religious parts of society. In fact the composition of the protesters as well as their complaints against the government and Erdogan strengthen this argument. Some of the policies implemented by the AKP over the past number of years have been interpreted as being anti-secular and slightly conservative, therefore extending the gap between the conservatives and other parts of society. After a period of democratization under the leadership of Erdogan, the stance of the AKP, its politics, and the rhetoric of some key personalities in the party have changed dramatically (Prodromoua 2012). Starting from its second term in government, Erdogan and his party clashed with the old ideological basis of the Turkish state, beginning with the republican elite and other secular powers in the country such as the military. Over time the AKP managed to marginalize it and disable the opposition by means which were not always considered democratic. Some judicial cases such as Ergenekon and Balyoz arose, in which the state accused intellectual, bureaucratic, military and media people of planning a coup against the AKP government to eliminate it (Gürsoy 2012). Although in the beginning some parts of society such as leftist and Kurdish groups agreed to these trials because they only targeted the old Kemalist elite, all non-conservative parts of society would later feel their freedoms and lifestyle limited by the AKP.

The AKP government and its members, especially in the person of Recep Tayyip Erdogan, started to target the private lives of nearly all non-religious groups. When looking at the public statements of Erdogan between 2005 and 2013, we can clearly identify this kind of intervention. In most of his public statements, Erdogan targets the old elite by referring to abolishing symbols and important aspects of the traces of Atatürk in public life. Just before the protest started, for instance, he intended to change the name of the state bank T.C. Ziraat Bankasi by eliminating the prefix T.C. which stands for Turkish Republic and selling it to a foreign company (HürriyetDailyNews 2013). The secular elites saw this attempt as a symbolic fight against the Turkish Republic and its secular character. Another factor which angered not only the Kemalist part of society was that he called the founders of the Turkish state, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and his friend Ismet İnönü “two drunks” (Yetkin 2013). As many people at least respect the memory of Atatürk as a state founder these words were highly insulting and angered not only the secular part of society, but the majority of Turkish people (Idiz 2013).

Erdogan has targeted not only the Kemalist part of society, but nearly all groups who do not share his values and world beliefs. On several occasions Erdogan managed to insult the religious stance of Alavites, criticized the drinking behavior of students and tried to dictate a new lifestyle for women in his speeches. His wish to press Turkish society into the frame of Islamic conservatism became evident when he announced his wish to raise a “religious generation (dindar genclik)” in 2012. Not only was his wish to educate future generations in Turkey, he also wanted half of society, namely women, to live in accordance with his and the AKP’s conservative mind set. In several speeches Erdogan and

other political figures of the AKP touched on the issue of women by telling them to have at least three children and that abortion would be considered murder very soon (Erdogan 2013). There exist many other examples from the last decade which easily illustrate how the AKP and Erdogan have increased the societal gap between its party and its supporters and other parts of society. Some even see a constant rise in the polarization of society in terms of secularism, religion and ethnicity from one electoral success of the party to another (Keyman 2014). Therefore we can speak of a gradual socio-political marginalization of the non-conservative parts of society in the past decade under the rule of the AKP as one of the long-term causes of the protest.

Capitalism, Conservative Bourgeoisie and Marginalization of Youth

While protest waves kicked off around the world in 2011, Turkish citizens were following the incidents in the Middle East, Greece and other parts of the world closely. However, by that time nobody predicted any similar movement in Turkey. For many years everything seemed under control: the military was brought under civil oversight, constitutional amendments were made according to the EU accession process and economic growth seemed unstoppable. Erdogan and his party were building successfully on Turkey's two-decade-long economic liberalization and were steadily raising the national income (Özel 2014). But with the AKP consolidating its position by centralizing and monopolizing power, a process started which led later to the Gezi movement and to a situation in which they became the victims of their own success. The economic boom mainly led to the rise of a new conservative bourgeoisie rather than to the establishment of a large middle class inclusive of and open to all parts of society. Some claimed that those who benefited most from the economic development under the AKP-rule were supporters of the government who gained power through the indirect patronage system (Aknur 2014). With the rule of law and many other state institutions under the monopoly of the AKP-government it seemed very unlikely for non-conservative parts of society to gain access to those somewhat state-controlled entities. Accordingly, some argue that this led to the socio-economic marginalization of the highly educated, more liberal, mainly young groups, and influenced their will to protest (Aknur 2014). Having analyzed some long-term factors, it can be argued that the government determined its own destiny by systematically marginalizing all non-conservative groups of society, economically, politically and socially. To understand the role, demands and composition of this marginalized group we have to take a look at the major player in the Gezi protest movement: the marginalized youth.

The "Gezi Generation"

Immediately after the protest the big question was: who are these people in Gezi Park? According to the government they were "extremists" or "terrorists". The government even encouraged conspiracy theories and claimed that the protestors were led by the so-called interest lobby or foreign forces who only wanted to harm Turkey and its thriving economy (Werz 2013). Scholars on the other hand assumed that the majority of the people who protested belonged to the middle class segments of Turkey, who had enjoyed a good education and who were internationally connected (Seufert 2013). Keeping in mind that those who died during the protest were all aged between 19 and 27 allows us to assume that it was the younger segment of society who protested. Even the group who started the protest Taksim Solidarity (Taksim Dayanismasi) on May 27 was mainly a group of university students who were brave enough to confront the policies of the Greater Istanbul Metropolitan

Municipality (Keyman 2014). These aspects allow us to raise the question of the role and participation of youth during the Gezi protest (Kulu 2013). Polls conducted during the protest showed that the average age of the people participating in the demonstrations was 28. Almost 50% of the protestors were under the age of 30 (KONDA 2014). Moreover, one in every four protestors was a student, thus strengthening the perception of a young movement in Gezi (Can 2013). One year after the protest we know more about the movement and its participants and are able to label the major group involved in the protest as young, urban, educated and non-ideological (Özel 2014). Therefore some started to speak of a “Gezi Generation”, characterized by a group of people who were younger than 30 and who were maybe born in the 1990s, mainly grew up during the rule of the AKP and who now resist this rule and the government’s wish to raise a religious generation (Atay 2013). Until the Gezi protests this societal group was invisible on the political stage and was considered to be uninterested in politics (Belge 2013). Young Turkish people became visible in the political arena when the Gezi protest broke out and when mainly youngsters lost their lives during clashes with the police, such as 21-year-old Ali Ismail Korkmaz. It was young people like him who turned into key figures for the young protestors while thousands of others were injured (Becatoros/Fraser 2013).

It was young people who made the difference during the Gezi protest especially when it came to taking part in the protests. One particularly important protest resource which only the youngsters could contribute to the protest was the use of social media. Looking at the new protest movements all around the world we can clearly identify the impact of social media on the protests in Egypt, Tunisia and Greece. Current research on the influence of social media during protests appear to validate this assumption. Della Porta and Mosca put forward the view that social media is one of today’s most important resources for the organization, implementation and success of a protest (Porta/Mosca 2005). Another major assumption in the literature is that social media have a high influence on the mobilization of participants for the protest. The use of social media tools such as Facebook, Twitter and other similar media not only to inform, but also to invite people to the protests increases the number of participants (Eltantawy/Wiest 2011). Other scholars emphasize an identity-forming role of social media. According to their view it is easier to create a communal spirit when interaction takes place on the streets as well as online (Garrett 2006).

Keeping a look at the use of those new communication technologies during the Gezi protest supports these theoretical assumptions. Firstly, over 35 million people in Turkey use the internet on a daily basis. Moreover Turkish people are the third largest national group on Facebook and most of them are younger users (Karabag/Coskun 2013). This shows how important the role of the internet in Turkey is and the potential of the resource that was lying in the hands of the protestors. Therefore, it is not a surprise that protesters used these social media resources during the protests to communicate, mobilize and inform each other about current developments. Some Twitter data analysis showed that the use of the internet and social media as such was an important tool for the Gezi revolt and that Twitter turned out to be the best tool for uprisings. It turned out that the vast majority of Turkish Twitter users used hashtags supportive of the protest, whereas only a small minority of Twitter users from Turkey supported the government on social media. Another important finding from the analysis was the regional distribution of hashtags: It was not the province of Istanbul

but the eastern province of Dersim where most “resist” hashtags were used (Champion 2013). This shows the considerable impact of social media in spreading the movement outside of the city of Istanbul (Dorsey 2013).

Apart from mobilizing and informing the protestors, another important impact of the use of social media during the protest was the identity-shaping of protesters through online media. With the utilization of social media came the spread of sarcastic comments and art about the government and especially about Erdogan himself. Laughing together meant solidarity for the youngsters. In a short time, young people developed new forms of protest (Dagli 2013). Some of these sarcastic pieces turned into nationwide resistance symbols, such as “the girl in the red dress” or “the standing man”. The distribution of these artistic symbols was especially effective on Twitter. The girl in the red dress was photographed during the very first days of the protest when a police officer gassed her without reason. Different artist tried to address this incident by reproducing it in different artistic mediums. Not only were the protestors caricatured but also pictures of the PM during his rallies in Ankara or Istanbul were sarcastically used by the social media community. For instance, the chequered jacket of the PM which he wore at a rally in Ankara, was not fashionable enough for the Gezi youth, and was seen as a symbol of the backwardness of the PM. Many other sarcastic works were influenced this (TEMPO 2013).

These are only some examples of the creative, sarcastic art pieces produced by young people and spread via social media to oppose the government. Keeping in mind that Turkish media suffer from state censorship and that many journalists are in jail due to their critical and investigative journalism, it is natural that youth used this tool. Moreover it can be argued that the social media environment was for a long time the only secure place left where youth could fight back without fearing any direct punishment by the state during the protests. We can therefore argue that the use of social media by young segments of society was unique and an important contribution to the protest. It clearly increased the mobilization of participants and helped to built up a common spirit for the protest. Given the centrality of this aspect during the Gezi protest, the role of social media and youth should not be underestimated for future perspectives on the development of Turkish democracy.

The Aftermath of the Gezi Protests

More than one year after the Gezi protests, not much is left from the initial Gezi Spirit and its Gezi Generation. According to some scholars, Gezi lacked the necessary momentum to become a fully bureaucratized movement because of the involvement of radical groups and the fact that the united groups went back to their old habits immediately after the protest. Although incidents such as the corruption scandal in December 2013 or the death of the youngest Gezi protestor Berkin Elvan 269 days after the protest meant a short re-awakening of the Gezi spirit, the movement never fully revived again (Inceoglu 2014).

The electoral process starting in March 2014 marked the end of the Gezi movement and the making of extra-institutional politics in Turkey. With mainstream political parties re-entering the political stage, extra-institutional claims were no longer valid. The illusion or the hope that challenging the authoritarianism of the AKP by campaigning and voting was still possible hindered the preservation and the maintenance of Gezi (Inceoglu 2014). When the political campaigns started, some were

hoping for the emergence of new politicians or leaders from the Gezi Generation. In fact, a “Gezi Party” was founded in October 2013 aimed at influencing the political process. It was supported by a mixture of young and old, left-wing and conservative mainly university students and led by the neo-classical metal musician Resit Cem Köksal (Aknur 2014). After the outcome of the March 2014 local elections all hopes that the Gezi Party might play a role for the future of Turkey disappeared: Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his party won the elections and remained in power (Carkoglu 2014). After the local elections people opposing the government hoped that at least the presidential elections might show a better outcome. Most of them did not believe that the polarizing figure of Recep Tayyip Erdogan would persuade the majority of Turkey. Despite everything, Erdogan was elected President of the Turkish Republic on 10 August 2014 by a large majority of the votes (Seufert 2014). According to observers the recent electoral success and the dominance of the AKP for the last seven elections marked the end of pluralist democracy and finally also of Gezi (Keyman 2014).

Nonetheless, underestimating the future role of the Gezi movement and youth by reviewing its impact only by looking at electoral outcomes would be wrong. The success of Gezi and the impact of the Gezi Generation should not be reduced only to these electoral outcomes, but should be reconsidered from different perspectives. Although the Gezi protests could not be translated into the institutional sphere, its major achievement was that helped the marginalized parts of society, especially the socio-economically marginalized youth, to overcome their fears and to resist the government. The Gezi protests also achieved the revitalizing of civil society: during and after the Gezi protest, various old and new organizations, many led by young activists, came together to influence mainstream politics. For instance the establishment of an organization called “Vote and Beyond (Oy ve Ötesi)” which aimed to prevent fraud during the local elections by assigning a volunteer for each ballot box attracted public attention (Inceoglu 2014). These are only some aspects which illustrate the change brought about in Turkish society and politics by the protest movement in the summer of 2013.

Is Winter Coming?

Although different scenarios for the future of Turkey are debated it seems very likely that the polarization between the different sets of society will steadily increase. Erdogan has taken no step back since the Gezi protest and it is very unlikely that he will do so in the future. Analyses have shown that with every step consolidating his power, his politics has become more and more polarizing. In Erdogan’s personal utopia, which he terms “New Turkey”, there is apparently no place for those who do not accept his definition of democracy (Seufert 2014). Criticism, checks and balances and participatory democracy seemed to have no place in the New Turkey. In fact for the first time in history, Turkey is not only facing the risk of being polarized but also of becoming a more and more divided society (Keyman 2014). Keeping the general political situation of Turkey in mind, Turkish youth and those who see themselves as part of the Gezi Generation will have to prepare for difficult times. Social media have been and will be one of the only free tool available to young people. However, remembering several attempts by the government to shut down YouTube and turn off Twitter, we can see that freedom of speech does not appeal to the President and his perception of a New Turkey either. Additional repressive measures or the closure of access to social media may

further complicate this situation. Nevertheless, as long as young people keep organizing and as long as social media is available, there is still some hope and it is called the “Gezi Generation”.

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Part III – Youth, Migration and the Socio-Economic Dimension

Reconfiguration of Tunisian Migration Politics after the 'Arab Spring' - The Role of Young Civil Society Movements

Inken Bartels

Abstract

Based on participant observation and personal conversations conducted during the World Social Forum (WSF) 2013 in Tunisia, the article analyzes the role of new, young and independent civil society movements emerging within the field of Tunisian migration and asylum politics. It shows how the revolts in 2011 have not only opened up a temporary opportunity for young Tunisians to leave their country but also to stay and politicize the issue of migration within Tunisian society in the longer run. As a result, it argues, that Tunisian migration politics have not only been re-shaped 'from above' through the interplay of the powerful international interests and new actors within Tunisian state politics, but are also increasingly influenced 'from below' by new actors of an emerging independent Tunisian civil society. While exploring the goals, agendas and forms of organization of three young movements present at the WSF 2013, particular attention will be paid to whom their claims are made and how they advance as well as challenge existing (mostly European dominated) struggles for the freedom of movement and what potentials and problems of transnational cooperation remain in this field.

Keywords

migration politics, civil society, youth, 'Arab Spring', Tunisia, World Social Forum

Introduction

Despite considerable media coverage of Tunisian 'boat-people' arriving at the shores of Lampedusa or dying in the Mediterranean Sea and their increasing prominence in international political discourses, (em)migration remains a highly sensitive topic within Tunisian society; one that is rarely discussed openly in public. This is despite the fact that almost every family knows someone among its members, friends or neighbors who has left or even died or disappeared while attempting to leave Tunisia. Therefore, for many Tunisians the issue of migration is one associated with loss, grief and incertitude, but also fear, since 'irregular' - meaning unauthorized - emigration had been criminalized and punished under the Ben Ali regime.

The World Social Forum (WSF) which was held in Tunisia for the first time in March 2013 was a good occasion to observe how this atmosphere has changed since the fall of the old regime in January 2011.⁵²¹ During the revolts leading to its fall, thousands of young Tunisians overcame their fears to chase out former President Ben Ali and his (border) security and police apparatus and also took the chance to leave the Tunisian coast towards Italy in the moment of political disorder (Fargues 2011;

⁵² Many of the insights presented in the article are based on observation and personal communication with young Tunisian activists during my participation at the World Social Forum 2013 in Tunisia (Bartels 2013).

Boubakri 2013). While the EU and its member states reacted quickly to (re)install their border control regime by signing (not so) new agreements with the Tunisian interim authorities, and to reinforce the FRONTEX mandate and mission to end the short-lived era of increased freedom of movement in the Mediterranean (Ben Achour/Ben Jemia 2011), Tunisians 'back home' also lost their fear to politicize and mobilize around the issue of migration and border control.

Two years later, new civil society movements, independently addressing domestic as well as international questions of border and migration politics, have emerged on Tunisia's political landscape. Three of them were especially active at the WSF 2013. Firstly, the *Association des Familles Victimes de l'Immigration Clandestine (AFVIC)* protested against the so-called 'left-to-die'-politics of the EU and its member states, demanding information and investigations into the disappearances in the Mediterranean Sea. Secondly, refugees and solidarity groups from the *Choucha camp* on the Libyan border brought their protest to the capital to confront the Tunisian government over the lack of a Tunisian asylum system and to address the UNHCR which is filling this gap. The UNHCR is therefore responsible for the camp, its closure in June 2013 and the outstanding solutions offered to the remaining refugees. Finally, *Article 13*, one of the new truly independent Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) which have been founded since 2011, critically addressed the consequences of the European border and visa regime as well as the unequal rights of migrants in Tunisia. Despite their close cooperation with European anti-racist political networks in this field, they complement their common 'No Border' and 'Freedom of Movement' slogans with their proper claim for 'the right to leave and the right to stay', based on Article 13 of the Declaration of Human Rights.

Based on participant observation and personal conversations conducted during the WSF 2013, the article shows how the revolts of 2011 have not only opened up a temporary opportunity for young Tunisians to leave their country but also to stay and politicize the issue of migration within Tunisian society in the long-term. As a result, Tunisian migration politics have not only been re-shaped 'from above'² through the interplay of powerful international interests and new actors within Tunisian state politics, but are also increasingly being challenged 'from below' by new actors of an emerging independent Tunisian civil society.³ While exploring the goals, agendas and forms of organization of three young movements present at the WSF 2013, particular attention will be paid to whom their claims are made and how they advance as well as challenge existing (mostly European-dominated) struggles for freedom of movement and what potentials and problems of transnational cooperation remain in this field.

Historical development of migration and related politics in Tunisia

Large-scale emigration from Tunisia – as from most Southern Mediterranean countries – started half a century ago. However, the period predating the revolts in 2011 saw the most intense emigration up to this point in Tunisian history, most of which was directed towards Europe (Di Bartolomeo et al. 2010, 1; Fargues/Fanderich 2012, 1).

² For the broader conceptual and empirical context of political transformations in the Mediterranean through the interplay of state and non-state actors, see also contributions to Schäfer and Henry 2009.

³ As this is a still ongoing process in the time of writing (September 2014), reflections and conclusions are necessarily only preliminary in character.

The role of Tunisian youth

Apart from the general political situation, most authors refer to the highly pressurized nature of the Tunisian labor market as the key cause of the high levels of emigration (Fargues 2004, 1351; Aubarell/Aragall 2005, 8). Un- and underemployment, especially of a growing highly educated, urban youth with high aspirations, provides a great potential for frustration among graduates as the Tunisian labor market does not provide corresponding employment opportunities for the largest generation, which was born in the 1980s and reached working age at the beginning of the 21st century (Lahlou 2006, 113)⁵. In addition to rising levels of education, more and more young women enter the local labor market and compete for the few jobs available. As the family and social constraints of earlier times are lifted, personal freedom of movement increases.

This economic as well as political frustration 'at home' is exacerbated by a strong attraction to the living standards of the population on the Northern shore of the Mediterranean Sea, as well as the development of new information technologies. For lots of Tunisian young people, Europe represents 'the best you can get in terms of living conditions, freedom, guarantees of one's rights, leisure activities, etc.' (Lahlou 2006, 110; Zekri 2008b, 5). Against this background, it is not surprising to learn that in 2005 more than 75% of young Tunisians⁶ considered emigration (Fargues 2011).

And indeed, despite the considerable impact of the financial and economic crisis on Southern European countries, their export-oriented agriculture, construction and tourism sectors have overall shown a high demand especially for seasonal, flexible and low-skilled labor over the last two decades. To some extent these sectors have never been reluctant to employ 'irregular migrants'. Furthermore, the decrease in the active population and aging across Europe leads its states to turn not only towards its Eastern but increasingly also towards its Southern neighbors in search of young, well-educated workers. At the same time however, the implementation of the visa system and the introduction of restrictive border control measures by European states has rendered emigration towards the Northern shore of the Mediterranean an increasingly difficult and dangerous task for Tunisian youth over the last 40 years.

Tunisia – from a country of emigration to a country of transit

These restrictive border and migration policies were first introduced by European states, especially in north-western Europe, only after the economic crisis of the mid-1970s. Until then, Tunisians, like most migrant workers from North Africa enjoyed easy legal access in Europe. As a consequence of the more restrictive policies, the mobility of migrant workers was replaced by permanent settlement of migrant families, since family reunification remained one of the few legal ways to enter and stay in Europe. Secondly, migrants searched for other routes and means to enter Europe such as clandestine entries, overstays after legal entries or asylum applications.

In this context, movements and practices of migration in the Mediterranean have significantly changed since the end of the 1980s. Besides economic, social and political factors within the countries of the African continent, regulatory changes in European migration politics, such as the introduction of the visa system and the implementation of the Schengen agreement, have affected

⁵ Youth unemployment rose from 22% in 1999 to 45% in 2009 (Honwana 2011).

⁶ Comparing to 22% in 1996 and 45% in 2000.

the changing quantity and quality of trans-Mediterranean migration (cf. Lahlou 2006, 109). In this context, Tunisia has experienced immigration from more distant countries in Africa and Asia, mostly of people on their way to Europe via the Mediterranean, making this traditional country of emigration also one of transit (Boubakri 2004).⁷

The changing politics of migration

In reaction, European states began to coordinate their policies towards the Southern Mediterranean. Since the mid-1990s, a number of joint Mediterranean policy initiatives have been established. In 1995, the Barcelona Process or so-called Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) addressed security, the promotion of economic exchange and the control of people's movement as interrelated issues. While enhancing the movement of certain goods and capital, it restricted the movement of people since security concerns ranked high among European priorities. Set out to combat 'irregular' migration and thus to enhance security in the Mediterranean, the EMP charged traditional emigration countries such as Tunisia and Morocco to control their external borders and introduce the differentiation between 'regular' and 'irregular' migration through visa policies (Bilgin/Bilgic 2011, 1). This securitization and externalization of European migration policies was elaborated within the 'Wider Europe Initiative' (2003) and the European Security Strategy (2003) introducing new measures for the EU's relations with its neighbors aimed at the creation of a 'safe neighborhood'. Revising the EMP, the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) made migration (control) a core issue of the Mediterranean 'partnership' in 2004. Introduced in the post-9/11 context, it remained committed to an overall security-oriented approach to migration. Focusing on bilateral rather than multilateral cooperation, however, it assigned – at least theoretically – the Southern countries a more active role in addressing their own priorities, such as co-development, enhanced mobility and 'regular' migration (Aubarell/Aragall 2005, 11; Zekri 2008a; 2011b). In sum, the ENP set out to create 'deeper levels of political and economic integration across and beyond the region, while simultaneously hardening the external borders and extending transnational institutions and practices for border regulation and management' (Casas-Cortes et al. 2013).

Regarding the implementation of European migration and border politics in the Southern Mediterranean, Tunisia was a rather 'passive witness' for a long time (Fargues 2004, 1358ff). Following the logic of EU politics, the regime of Ben Ali criminalized 'irregular' emigration⁸ and controlled its sea borders accordingly. However, it did not introduce the visa requirements for citizens from other African countries demanded by the EU. Instead, motivated by economic concerns and the will to maintain ties with its emigrant communities abroad, Tunisia developed some genuine policies in the field of 'regular' emigration. Political institutions, such as the *Office for Tunisians abroad (l'Office des Tunisiens à l'Étranger, OTE)*, founded in 1988, and the *High Council of Tunisians abroad (l'Haut Conseil des Tunisiens à l'Étranger)*, founded in 1990, were exclusively concerned with 'regular' emigration and the relations with its citizen abroad. While the early official Tunisian policy in this area was to encourage emigrants to return, it later focused on managing the economic, cultural and subsequently also political relations with the growing Tunisian diaspora (cf. Fargues 2004, 1362).

⁷ Between 1986 and 2000 Tunisia saw an average net inflow of 77 300 people, mostly coming from its neighboring region (Boubakri 2004, 7).

⁸ See for example a series of Tunisian laws adopted and published in 2004 (Law n° 1975-40 of 14 May 1975, regarding passports and travel documents, modified in 1998, 2004 and 2008).

While Tunisia at least to some extent developed policies regarding ('regular') emigration, no particular policies or institutional frameworks were designed to address the question of immigration and asylum – beyond its sheer criminalization – under the old regime (Di Bartolomeo et al. 2010, 7).⁹

In terms of its foreign policy, 'irregular' emigration and its control in particular, became a subject of growing importance as a bargaining tool and tactical resource in Tunisia's multi- and bilateral political negotiations (Cassarino/Lavenex 2012). Especially since the EU applies a more liberal rhetoric of migration management, dialogue and 'shared responsibility' under the 'Global Approach to Migration' (GAM) in 2005, emphasizing cooperation with third countries and advocating more flexible temporal and 'regular' movements between the two shores of the Mediterranean, countries like Tunisia became more interested in cooperation in migration and border politics with the EU (Aubarell/Aragall 2005, 6; Pascouau 2012, Casas-Cortes et al. 2013). However, even under the GAM, the economic and politically weaker position of the Southern Mediterranean states vis-à-vis the EU practically bound them to address migration as a security problem and to adopt its militarized and highly technologized measures. Besides its financial dependence on European 'development aid', 'cooperation with the EU has allowed access to new technological instruments and resulted in the weakening of EU criticism of acts of repression in the short term, [while] it has further alienated civil society from the regimes, thus feeding into their insecurity in the long run' (Bilgin/Bilgic 2011, 7).¹⁰

Reconfiguration of migration politics after the 'Arab Spring'

As shown above, for the second half of the 20th century young Tunisians mostly responded to their political and economic frustrations with 'exit', meaning emigration. In the early 2000s, 'voice', meaning protest¹¹, became more and more an option, providing the ground for the so-called 'Tunisian revolution' in January 2011.¹²

The Tunisian revolts in 2011

Frustration among the Tunisian youth is not only seen as a major source of emigration but also a key factor for the revolts in 2011 (Fargues 2011; Fargues/Fanderich 2012).¹³ The longstanding and widespread discontent among (not only) Tunisian youth, especially in fields where the patriarchal system concentrates political and economic power in the hands of the older generations, finally brought together a broad coalition of social and political forces against the Ben Ali regime. Starting when the 26 year old street vendor Mohammed Bouazizi burned himself in Sidi Bouzid, a small town in central Tunisia on December 17 2010 to protest against the economic conditions and mistreatment by the police, the growing protest finally overthrew the 23 year long dictatorship of Ben Ali on 14 January 2011. This revolutionary situation affected migration movements in the Southern Mediterranean and, as a consequence, challenged politics on both shores.

⁹ To some extent the UNCHR tried to fill this gap, but its role was weakened by its unauthorized position in Tunisia.

¹⁰ For the point of view of the few existing civil society organizations in Tunisia before the revolution, such as the *LTDH* and the *UGTT*, see Boubakri 2004 and Zekri 2008b.

¹¹ Using Hirschman's famous theory of response to deteriorating conditions with 'loyalty', 'exit' or 'voice' (1970) as applied i.a. by Souiah as a conceptual framework for the study of 'irregular' migration from Algeria (Souiah 2012).

¹² I am exceptionally using the prominent label 'Tunisian revolution' here to refer to the political events that took place in the beginning of 2011 in Tunisia at large. Otherwise however I prefer the notions of political revolts, uprisings or rebellions in this context in order to highlight the ongoing and uncompleted character of this revolutionary process.

¹³ For a detailed discussion of the role of the youth and the Tunisian revolts, see Honwana 2011, and the contribution of Carolina Silveira in this collective volume.

The 'Italian crisis'

In the first three months of 2011, 25,000 irregular migrants landed on the Southern Italian Island of Lampedusa. Facilitated by the reduced and disorganized policing of borders during the revolts in Tunisia, the short increase in Tunisian emigration, however, was mainly due to the strong desire to emigrate which predated the revolts (Fargues 2011; Boubakri 2013). Eventually it was mainly the war in Libya, from where migrants were fleeing violence and instability that significantly increased the transnational movement towards Europe (Fargues/Fanderich 2012, 4).

EU member states, especially Italy which had enjoyed good diplomatic relations with the Ben Ali regime¹⁴, reacted with anxiety about the 'exodus' or 'invasion' of Tunisians towards its shores.¹⁵ Declaring a state of emergency, a number of decrees and implementation measures were introduced during the first half of 2011 to deal with the migrants arriving in Italy (Maccanico 2012, 4). As a result, those who arrived between 1 January and 5 April 2011 were granted six-month temporary residence permits for humanitarian reasons. Tunisian immigrants largely used these temporary visas to move on towards France, which triggered a quarrel between the two countries and even put the Schengen agreement, which had abolished border controls between most EU states in the 1990s, under question (Martin 2012, 4). Overall however, emigration from North Africa to Europe has – with the exception of the increased movement from Tunisia in the first half of 2011 – quickly followed earlier trends as border controls in Tunisia were reinstalled or reinforced respectively (Fargues/Fanderich 2012)¹⁶.

The 'Libyan crisis'

The maxim of denying entry into the EU remained the top priority of European policies (Martin 2012). In this respect, European states also quickly responded to the 'emergency situation' at the Tunisian-Libyan border, sending humanitarian and operational support, in order to avoid 'massive migration' towards Europe predicted by European media and politicians.

Comparing to the 700,000 migrants displaced after the war in Libya within North Africa, about 345,000 of them heading to Tunisia, only a small fraction of about 5% actually tried to reach Europe at that time (Fargues 2011). In Tunisia, migrants fleeing or returning from Libya were first taken care of by the Tunisian army, the local population and NGOs providing them with basic needs.¹⁷ This spontaneous reaction showed the general potential for civil society engagement which had been suppressed by the old regime in Tunisia (Zekri 2011). While the vast majority of the migrants were repatriated with the help of International Organizations (IOs) or had left Tunisia on their own by mid-2011, about 1000 refugees remained in Tunisia's first refugee camps since the Algerian war in 1962. The *Choucha camp* run by the UNHCR quickly became the biggest and most permanent site among

¹⁴ Already 1998 Italy and Tunisia signed the first readmission agreement, started joined border patrol trainings and missions in the Mediterranean and negotiated 'regular' migration quotas for Tunisians in Italy.

¹⁵ For a detailed account of Italian, French and the EU's reaction see in particular Ben Achour and Ben Jemia 2011 as well as Schäfer 2011a.

¹⁶ The rising numbers of crossings of the Mediterranean since mid-2013 despite these enhanced security and their political and humanitarian consequences – such as the introduction of EUROSUR, the Mediterranean Task Force, the Italian 'Mare Nostrum' and most recently its European successor FRONTEX Plus/Triton – are new and important trends to analyze but must remain beyond the scope of this paper.

¹⁷ See blog entry by Boubakri, H. and Potot, S., 'Migrations tunisiennes: quand les visas se tarissent, la mer prend le relais', Mars 11, 2011 on <http://blogs.mediapart.fr/blog/swpotot/100311/exode-et-migrations-en-tunisie-quand-la-societe-civile-se-reveille>.

them (Boubakri 2013, 11). As a result, Tunisia became a host country for large-scale immigration which led the country to embark upon a – still ongoing – process to reform its insufficient asylum system (Planes-Bloissac 2012).

The reconfiguration of Tunisian migration politics 'from above'

Shortly after the Tunisian revolts, the EU tried to reestablish re-admission agreements and border control cooperation with the post-revolution transitional authorities. However, despite the remaining unequal power relations between the two shores of the Mediterranean, the new Tunisian authorities were hesitant to accept treating migration as a mere security issue at first, as they became more reluctant to implement any European-driven decision against the will of an increasingly self-confident and organized civil society (Maccanico 2012, 2; Ben Khalifa 2013, 182). As a consequence, dimensions of 'technical operational cooperation' and 'inclusive development' (Cassarino/Lavenex 2012) as well as 'extra financial assistance' of about €140 million were added as incentives to the new bilateral arrangements (Fargues/Fanderich 2012, 7). A Cooperation Agreement, signed under these conditions with Italy on 5 April 2011, stated that the EU supports reforms in Tunisia but expects 'strong and clear action by Tunisia to accept the readmission of its nationals who are irregularly in Europe' and in 'fighting irregular migration'. In a similar sense, the 'Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity' (2011) and the so-called 'Dialogues for Migration, Mobility and Security' at the center of the renewed 'Global Approach to Migration and Mobility' (GAMM) in 2011 explicitly introduced the principle of conditionality under a new 'more for more' slogan to EU-Tunisian relations (Zekri 2011, 6; Pascouau 2012, 58).

When negotiations of so-called 'Mobility Partnerships' started under this new framework in 2011, many Tunisian actors at first showed equally little enthusiasm for the European version. Instead they put forward their own priorities quite different from those envisaged by the EU, making an agreement far from certain for about three years (Fargues/Fanderich 2012, 8). According to a report by the Tunisian migration researcher Boubakri, all political parties in the new parliament agreed that Tunisia should no longer play the gatekeeper for European borders and emphasized the need for humane treatment of refugees in Tunisia (2013). Furthermore, civil society actors campaigned to be involved in the various stages of the negotiation process (Zekri 2011, 2). As a representative of Tunisia's biggest trade union *UGTT* critically summarizes, "[t]he position of the Tunisian government is never clear. I do not remember exactly, but if it is about encouraging migrants to return in exchange for a little money, then this has little to do with the dignity of the Tunisian citizen and national sovereignty in international forums" (quoted in Boubakri 2013, 18). Despite the widely articulated domestic and international skepticism¹⁸, the Tunisian government signed a 'Privileged Partnership' with the EU in November 2012, whose Action Plan for 2013-2017 called for greater participation by civil society actors in designing renewed EU-Tunisian relations but also explicitly stated the objective of concluding a 'Partnership for Mobility'.¹⁹ One and a half years later, Tunisian

¹⁸ For the critical position of Tunisian civil society actors the see 'EU-Tunisia Mobility Partnership: Externalization policy in disguise', December 3, 2013 on <http://httpn-www.fidh.org/en/north-africa-middle-east/tunisia/14335-eu-tunisia-mobility-partnership-externalisation-policy-in-disguise>, 'Adresse à M. Mehdi Jomaa, nouveau chef du gouvernement intérimaire', January 5, 2014 on <http://ffm-online.org/2014/01/05/aufruf-tunesischer-migrantinnenverbaende/#more-17337> and 'Non aux accords de gestion concertée de l'immigration imposée par l'Union Européenne aux pays limitrophes de l'UE', March 10, 2014 on <http://ffm-online.org/2014/03/10/tunesien-marokko-eu-nein-zu-den-mobilitaetpartnerschaften/#more-19567>.

¹⁹ 'Relations Tunisie – Union Européenne: Un partenariat privilégié. Plan d'action 2013 – 2017' on

authorities finally agreed with the representatives of the EU and its member states to open negotiations under the framework of this 'Partnership for Mobility'. This non-binding agreement basically offers Tunisia the facility of short term legal migration for some specific groups (such as students, researchers and highly qualified Tunisians) in exchange for its readmission of 'irregular' Tunisians and other migrants who entered the EU clandestinely through Tunisia.²⁰

Criticism again came from both sides of the Mediterranean: According to the declaration of a transnational civil society network 'it offers only half-hearted commitments to promote legal avenues to access the European territory, mainly facilitation of short-term visas for the most privileged and/or qualified persons'²¹. But also former EU Home Affairs Commissioner Malström criticized the EU member states for their double standards regarding the application of democratic and human rights principles in their foreign policies on the one hand, and their migration politics on the other: 'In 2011, the EU missed a historic opportunity to demonstrate its commitment to the foundations it is built on. It is as if we'd said to them: "It is wonderful that you make a revolution and want democracy but, by all means [possible], stay where you are because we have an economic crisis to deal with here."' (quoted in de Haas/Sigona 2012, 4). In sum, despite its humanitarian and democracy-oriented rhetoric, the EU did not offer any new responses to the challenges of cross-Mediterranean migration after the 'Arab Spring' but rather continued its efforts to strengthen restrictive border controls and pressure on readmission agreements (Fargues/Fanderich 2012, 5; Ben Achour/Ben Jemia 2011; Zekri 2011; Carrera et al. 2012; Report of the UN Commissioner of Human Rights 2012). Whether and how the Tunisian government will follow the incentives given by the EU and its member states and implement the security-oriented cooperation agreements or liberate itself towards a more human rights oriented agenda remains to be seen.

After three years, it seems that migration politics have not ranked among the highest priorities during Tunisia's transition period. Observations so far remain ambivalent. First of all, the ongoing reform of existing institutions (such as *OTE*) and the creation of new ones (e.g. a *Secretary of State for Migration and Tunisians Abroad* (*le Secrétariat d'État des Migrations et des Tunisiens à l'Étranger-SEMTE*), an *Agency of Migration and Development* (*l'Agence pour la Migration et le Développement*) and a *National Migration Observatory* (*l'Observateur National pour la Migration*)) has had high priority for the new Tunisian authorities, to better link Tunisians abroad to their 'home country' and thus enhance economic and political development through migration.²² In this context, the interim government also 'insists on revising migration agreements with European states in order to link actions to prevent irregular migration with measures to boost development' (Fargues/Fanderich 2012, 9). Seeking for the first time also their political participation, *Tunisians Residing Abroad* was granted a representative in the Tunisian Parliament. Another new government body, the *SEMTE*, is now focusing exclusively on migration issues (Boubakri 2013, 14ff).

²⁰ http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/tunisia/documents/press_corner/plan_action_tunisie_ue_2013_2017_fr.pdf.
 'Déclaration conjointe pour le Partenariat de Mobilité entre la Tunisie, l'Union Européenne et ses États membres participants.', 3 March 2014. In: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/e-library/documents/policies/international-affairs/general/docs/declaration_conjointe_tunisie_ue_mobility_fr.pdf as well as 'EU and Tunisia establish Mobility partnership', Press Release March 3, 2014 on http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-14-208_fr.htm.

²¹ 'Tunisia-EU Mobility Partnership: a Forced March towards the Externalization of Borders', March 17, 2014 on <http://www.migreurop.org/article2492.html?lang=fr>.

²² As (registered) financial remittances send 'home' from Tunisians abroad account for about 5% of the Tunisian GDP.

Regarding immigration, Tunisia under transition has kept an 'open-door policy' at least towards immigrants fleeing the war in Libya and has – supported by the EU and the UNHCR – started to reform its incomplete legal framework concerning the rights of immigrants, asylum seekers and refugees in Tunisia (Planes-Boissac 2012). While the new constitution formally acknowledges under Article 26 the right to political asylum and prohibits extraditing political refugees, Tunisia has not yet adopted legislation replacing the 2004 law generally criminalizing 'irregular' migration. For the time being, no residence permits have been delivered to refugees in Tunisia, but the asylum procedure by the UNHCR in cooperation with the Red Crescent remains tolerated (Statewatch 2014). As 'the Tunisian government [is] obviously unwilling to become the de facto reception country for massive push backs at sea'²³, migrants that are returned to Tunisia or 'rescued' at sea by the Tunisian National Guard occasionally find themselves in prison or detention centers or even further deported or returned 'voluntarily' to other African countries (cf. BfdW et al. 2013, 11). In this respect, while Tunisian authorities rarely openly oppose the EU, they silently refused to participate in one of the latest European initiatives, the Seahorse network through which information about incidents and patrols in the Mediterranean could be exchanged.

Therefore it remains an open question, whether the growing demands for democratic and human rights within Tunisia, also pushes its government towards more inclusive and respectful immigration policies at home and a more critical stance towards the security-oriented European policies. Regardless, the incoming Tunisian government has already been asked to 'define its own priorities and underlying principles on migration policy and make them public' (Cassarino/Lavenex 2012). In this context, an emerging independent civil society can play a decisive role in the promotion of migration politics that are more focused on migrants' rights than European security interests (Crépeau 2012).

In sum, while both emigration and protest have been observed to increase with the rise of a new connected and informed generation of frustrated young Tunisians, these have mainly been perceived as two either-or options (namely 'voice' and 'exit') in academic literature (Fargues 2011; Fargues/Fanderich 2012). In addition, I argue for a third effect that can be observed in the current Tunisian society where by the two options are combined leading to an increasing politicization of migration issues 'from below'. In the remaining paper, I will present three examples of how young and independent civil society movements are raising their voices against the dominant national as well as international border and migration policies.

Challenging Tunisian migration politics 'from below'

Before the revolts in 2011, the topic of migration had been largely absent from the media and public debates in Tunisia (Zekri 2008a, 12; Planes-Boissac 2010, 14). There were neither civil society organizations specialized in migration and asylum politics nor any migrants' (self-)organizations in Tunisia.²⁴ And even at times of consolidation and re-organization of the Tunisian state, migration policy often took a 'backseat' in official state politics (Fargues/Fanderich 2012, 12).

²³ <http://ffm-online.org/2014/04/24/lampedusa-28-000-boat-people-nutzen-mare-nostrum-eu-militaer-nordafrikanische-haefen/>.

²⁴ For the role of the numerous associations of *Tunisians Residing Abroad* defending their rights within Tunisian politics before and after the 'revolution' which are beyond the scope of this paper, see Zekri 2009, 2011.

The emerging role of an independent civil society in Tunisian migration politics

Young people, however, were not only leading the protest against the Ben Ali regime, they were also the ones keeping migration on the Tunisian political agenda. As they remain skeptical about and widely absent from the creation of the numerous new political parties, they rather organize in civil society associations and social movements that more directly articulate 'their' problems (Howana 2011, 17). Often young people who initiated the revolution were not politically organized before, as criticism of political or social conditions was systematically repressed under the old regime. Furthermore, freedom of association was virtually non-existent (Boubakri 2013, 29). 'With few exceptions such as the Tunisian League for Human Rights, all organizations and associations that worked on political issues were denied legal registration [in Tunisia. As such, they had a] very limited margin for maneuver, since they were not allowed to hold public meetings or engage in any sort of public criticism of the regime' (Honwana 2011, 7). The funding possibilities for autonomous civil society engagement were equally precarious, as European support for example was mostly directed towards state institutions under the Ben Ali regime (BfdW et al. 2013, 9). For the field of migration politics, this meant that independent expression and political action by individuals or unauthorized associations was practically almost impossible (Boubakri 2013, 20)²⁵.

Nevertheless, two types of non-state actors addressing the issue of migration were present during this time in Tunisia. On the one hand, humanitarian organizations, such as the social service branch of the Catholic Church, *Caritas*, and the operational partner of the UNHCR, the *Tunisian Red Crescent*, were providing humanitarian and material assistance to vulnerable migrants. On the other hand, a few established organizations not specialized in migration incorporated such issues into their overall agenda on human rights (*the Tunisian League for Human Rights/la Ligue Tunisienne des Droits de l'Homme, LTDH*), on workers' rights (*l'UGTT*). Among them, the *UGTT* had the most elaborate political program on migration in Tunisia and the way it should be treated (Zekri 2008a, 11)²⁶. Furthermore, women's organizations, such as the *Tunisian Association of Democratic Women (l'Association Tunisienne des Femmes démocratiques, ATFD)* and the *Association of Tunisian Women for Development Research (l'Association des Femmes Tunisiennes pour la Recherche sur le Développement, AFTURD)* occasionally addressed the case of migrant and refugee women within the scope of their actions.

Only after the revolts has Tunisian civil society achieved a significant degree of freedom to conduct independent activities to support the rights of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers (Planes-Boissac 2012, 56). No longer bound by the hegemonic political discourse and ideologies, they quickly created new ways of engaging the state and society in these issues (Honwana 2011, 20). As the result, two years later, the creation, institutionalization and transnationalization of new independent movements and associations in the field of migration politics can be observed. I observed and interviewed three of them at the WSF 2013.

²⁵ More than 6000 associations, often so-called TROs (Truly Governmental Organizations) existed who were subject to political authorities and the Ministry of the Interior in particular. In the area of migration politics, their main mission was the (political) control of the Tunisian diaspora (Boubakri 2013, 20). For a good historical overview of the associative sector in Tunisia, see also Zekri 2009.

²⁶ The *UGTT's* Department of International Relations and Emigration for example started to organize conferences on migration issues in 2007 (Zekri 2009, 9).

„L'Association des Familles Victimes de l'Immigration Clandestine“(AFVIC) – *The Association of Families Victim of Clandestine Immigration*

According to the Council of Europe, 2000 migrants are estimated to have died in the Mediterranean Sea in 2011, at a time when it had become one of the most militarized and heavily patrolled areas of the globe (Ben Achour/Ben Jemia 2011; de Haas and Sigora 2012). The blog *Fortress Europe* has counted 1,674 deaths in the Sicilian channel in 2011, approximately 83% of all deaths in the Mediterranean Sea.²⁷ As a result, a movement of Tunisian, European and other North African associations began to protest against the gap between the EU's rhetoric and actual practices of human rights within their migration management leading to what became known as the first 'migration revolt' in Tunisia (Dünnwald/Kopp 2013, 24).

In this context families of about 350 missing migrants, who began to organize themselves in the *Association of Families Victim of Clandestine Immigration (AFVIC)* in 2011 in order to search for their relatives, became publicly known. Starting with spontaneous sit-ins, hunger strikes and attempts to burn themselves, in order to receive public attention, they quickly started to cooperate with Tunisian but also European associations (Ben Khalifa 2013; *Liberation* September 13, 2013). Since then, *Migreurop*²⁸ in France and the women's collective *Il Venticinque Undici* in Italy have been supporting their search for information about the missing migrants in Europe and continue their protest against detention, deportation and expulsion by the French and Italian authorities on the Northern shore of the Mediterranean. On the Tunisian side, the *Tunisian Forum on Economic and Social Rights (le Forum Tunisien pour les Droits Économiques et Sociaux, FTDES)*²⁹ helped the families to raise public attention, for example through jointly organizing demonstrations in the capital³⁰. Together with the *International Human Rights League*, the *LTDH* and the *ATFD*, the *FTDES* called the Tunisian prime minister to sign the United Nations Convention on the Protection of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families.³¹ Furthermore, a broader transnational movement was initiated in spring 2011 by the French associations, *la Cimade*³² and *Migreurop* together with the Moroccan association *GADEM*³³ to denounce the consequences of European migration policy towards Tunisia and reinforce the relationship with the newly established independent civil society actors (la Cimade/GADEM 2011). Due to this combined transnational pressure, the newly appointed *SEMTE* became active for the first time. Representing the Tunisian government on the issue, the new Secretary of State for migration issues met with the families concerned, re-opened files of unsolved cases and - in cooperation with Italian authorities - started a mission to collect information about the migrants who 'disappeared' between January and April 2011 and those irregularly held in detention centers in the EU (Ben Khalifa 2013, 184; Boubakri 2013, 14).

²⁷ See <http://fortresseurope.blogspot.com/search/label/CIE?updated-max=2011-07-18T17%3A05%3A00%2B02%3A00&max-results=20>.

²⁸ <http://www.migreurop.org/>.

²⁹ <http://www.ftdes.net/>.

³⁰ For example, in front of the Italian embassy when the Italian president Berlusconi visited Tunisia on April 4, 2011; see 'Manifestation anti Berlusconi devant l'Ambassade d'Italie en Tunisie', April 4, 2011 on <http://www.kapitalis.com/politique/3377-manifestation-anti-berlusconi-devant-lambassade-ditalie-en-tunisie.html>.

³¹ 'Tunisie: Appel à la ratification de la Convention internationale sur les travailleurs migrants', Lettre ouverte au Premier ministre, July 25, 2011 on <http://www.fidh.org/fr/maghreb-moyen-orient/tunisie/Tunisie-Appel-a-la-ratification-de>.

³² <http://www.lacimade.org/>.

³³ <http://www.gadem-asso.org/>.

Furthermore, after demonstrations and sit-ins in front of the Ministry of the Interior jointly organized by the *AFVIC* and *FTDES*, an agreement between the Tunisian government and the EU was reached to establish a board of inquiry on the shipwreck of 6 September (Planes-Boissac 2012, 54). In addition, the Tunisian and Italian governments announced plans to revise their bilateral agreements to include a 'global dimension taking into account the causes which push young Tunisians to risk their lives at sea' (Tunisian Press Agency, September 13, 2012). According to Boubakri, the political pressure of a transnational political movement put on authorities on both sides of the Mediterranean Sea explains the campaign's success 'to make the two governments redouble efforts to find survivors, to identify prisoners and to allow families to mourn whose relative are confirmed missing' (2013, 14f.). Meanwhile, Tunisian associations keep up the pressure and even harden their tone vis-à-vis their government demanding greater distance from the EU migration policies and more serious investigations into the missing migrants. In addition, traditionally influential Tunisian organizations such as the *LTDH* and the *UGTT* have joined the demand for an independent commission of inquiry including authorities, NGOs and representatives of the families concerned, which despite all expressions of good will is still rejected by the Tunisian government (Ben Khalifa 2013, 183). Protesting at the WSF 2013, a more experienced and well connected *AFVIC* was turning towards the international community and addressed directly the EU Commission as the highest instance for their demands for investigations about the disappearances in the Mediterranean Sea.

'Voices from Choucha' – The protest of refugees from the 'Choucha Camp'

After the outbreak of the war in Libya in February 2011, hundreds of thousands of people - Libyans and foreign refugees - crossed the border into Tunisia. Four camps were installed at the Tunisian side of the border to accommodate the refugees. The *Choucha camp*, opened in February 2011 about 9km from the border, was the largest of them and remained in operation the longest. It was directed by the UNHCR and managed by the Danish Refugee Council and the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Intended for a few thousand refugees, there were about 20,000 people living there by 2012. The camp became overcrowded and lacked food, water and medical supplies. Tensions also existed between different communities in the camp (CeTuMa 2013).

However, the refugees living in Choucha, were not allowed to move around freely in Tunisia, but had to remain in the region around the camp. While many of them – more than 4000 according to the UNHCR official numbers³⁴ – were recognized and resettled in other countries by the UNHCR or left the country on their own, about 500 still have no legal status in Tunisia. They have not been not recognized by the UNHCR as refugees and Tunisia has no law on asylum to regularize their situation (Crépeau 2012). Others, who were recognized but not accepted to the resettlement program, were offered 'local integration' within Southern Tunisia even though the institutional framework and available funding options were insufficient to do so.³⁵ Therefore, those who do not want or cannot return to Libya or their countries of origin still find themselves in a precarious situation of

³⁴ As quoted from Al-Jamai, M., 'A Refuge No More. Camp Choucha officially closed on June 30 but some refugees are refusing to go', July 1, 2013 on <http://www.correspondents.org/node/2946>.

³⁵ Those who participated in the 'local integration program' (that was co-financed by European countries) were offered 90 DT (about 45€) to rent a house somewhere near in Ben Gardène/Guerdene (Tringham 2013). Due to this impossible task and the experienced (racial) discrimination while trying to do so, more than 50% refused to participate in the program (see also 'Choucha Refugee Camp to Close, Leaving Hundreds of Residents in Limbo', June 28, 2013 on <http://www.tunisia-live.net/2013/06/28/choucha-refugee-camp-to-close-leaving-hundreds-of-residents-in-limbo/>).

lawlessness and discrimination in Tunisia. 'Officially it is as if they do not exist'³⁶. While dozens of humanitarian organizations worked in and around the camp when it opened in 2011, today only the Tunisian Army is present and it is about to turn the space into a military zone³⁷. Since October 2011, the UNHCR has continuously decreased its provision of food and medical supplies. In April 2013 they cut the electricity for the first time and reduced the amount of drinking water in order to persuade those who had not been accepted on the resettlement program to participate in the IOM's 'voluntary return program' (Tringham 2013). Despite this unsettled situation, the EU called its humanitarian management a 'successful strategy' (Lüdemann 2013) and the UNHCR closed the camp in June 2013 without offering acceptable solutions to those still remaining in the desert without food, water, money or medical supplies³⁸. Nevertheless, about 150 refugees have chosen to stay and others have even returned to the camp, which the refugees are now running by themselves. Many who had left experienced discrimination or were unable to find 'legal' jobs or affordable accommodation in the cities of Southern Tunisia. Moreover, those 'rescued' at sea by the Tunisian National Guard have found a place to stay in this tolerated 'ghost town' after leaving the city of Medenine where the UNHCR and the Red Crescent today focus their operations. For those returning to or remaining in Choucha today, the choice seems to be try to find work in Libya or take a boat towards Italy³⁹.

As a consequence of their desperate situation, the refugees who were excluded from the resettlement program or not even recognized as refugees by the UNHCR started a nationwide protest in May 2011, which increasingly raised international attention and transnational solidarity. Their major demands are to be accorded asylum and to be granted international protection in a 'safe country' (meaning one with an effective system of protection, which is absent in Tunisia) and thus a general resettlement for everyone in the *Choucha camp*.⁴⁰

Starting with peaceful demonstrations on the main streets around the camp in May 2012, a group of 50 refugees went to the Tunisian capital located 400km north of the *Choucha camp* one year later to conduct a hunger strike in front of the UNHCR head office in Tunis. At first, their protest focused mainly on the UNHCR as the responsible actor for their desperate situation (*Jungle World* April, 14 2013). Between February and April 2013, they organized sit-ins in front of the office of the EU and European embassies located in Tunis calling them to 'finish their job' and to 'stand up to their responsibilities, not turning deaf ears to the situation' but allowing the refugees admission into their countries.⁴¹ Finally, they also went to the Tunisian government to demand an end to the 'local integration program'.⁴² Since none of these actors has accepted responsibility or taken any action as a result – apart from calling the Tunisian police and sending the protesting refugees to jail⁴³ – the

³⁶ Pradilla, A., 'Libya: Refugees of Libyan War Protest at World Social Forum', March 31, 2013 on <http://allafrica.com/stories/201304010087.html>.

³⁷ See <http://blechvisa.blogspot.de/>.

³⁸ See Choucha protest solidarity blog which reports how the Tunisian military has helped emptying the remaining water tanks and tearing down the toilets on <http://chouchaprotest.noblogs.org/>.

³⁹ Report Choucha Delegation vom 18. Januar bis zum 26. Januar 2014' on http://www.borderline-europe.de/sites/default/files/features/Report_Deutsch_Endversion-3.pdf.

⁴⁰ See <http://voiceofchoucha.wordpress.com/>.

⁴¹ Protest declaration' February 2, 2013 by 'voiceofchoucha' on <http://voiceofchoucha.wordpress.com/>.

⁴² Protest für Flüchtlingsrechte vor der EU-Delegation in Tunis, Tunesien', Press Release of the Choucha Solidarity Network, April 23, 2013 on chouchaprotest.noblogs.org.

⁴³ 'La prison ou l'expulsion pour les réfugiés de Choucha?' Communiqué de presse, February 9, 2014 on <http://ffm-online.org/2014/02/09/tunis-20-protestierende-choucha-fluechtlinge-vor-eu-delegation-verhaftet/#more-18439> and 'Tunis:

refugees used the WSF 2013 as a broader platform for their demands calling Tunisian and foreign activists for support (*Jungle World* April, 14 2013).

Consequently, other newly established Tunisian associations, together with transnational networks and organizations, have put the rights of refugees of the *Choucha camp* high on their agenda. The *FTDES*, *CeTuMa*⁴⁴ and the *LTDH* have organized conferences and published press releases to raise attention on the obligations of the Tunisian government, the UNHCR and the NATO member states involved in the war in Libya. The *FTDES* carries out and coordinates activities to support refugees in the *Choucha camp*. Ironically the UNHCR uses their growing activism as an excuse: 'Tunisia has one of the most active civil society movements after their revolution. There are a lot of options; the UNHCR isn't the only actor in Tunisia.'⁴⁵

In addition, activists from Choucha and the Tunisian solidarity associations got in contact with organizations and networks from Europe who collect funds and raise awareness about the situation in Choucha.⁵³⁴⁶ Together they have organized press conferences, debates, film screenings and demonstrations not only in Tunisia but also in many European capitals, promoting an image of the refugees in Tunisia not as victims or objects of help but as actors of resistance articulating their demands for political and social rights.

'Article 13' – Fighting for the right to stay and the right to leave

Besides these rather spontaneous protest movements addressing international migration and border politics as well as the unsettled situation within Tunisia as a country of transit and immigration, a number of new independent associations have further institutionalized the political struggle for migrant rights 'from below'.

The youth association *Article 13* founded in summer 2012 in Tunis is one of them.⁵⁴⁴⁷ Inspired by the preparations for the WSF 2013, a group of young women, who had already been active in university groups and other human rights associations before, started to self-organize around questions of freedom of movement and refugee rights within Tunisia. Their aim is to enhance critical discussions within Tunisian society about these issues and about alternatives to the dangerous journeys across the Mediterranean Sea.

Well-connected within Tunisian civil society as well as abroad, they address migration from a perspective (not only) new to the Tunisian political discourse. The name *Article 13* was chosen in reference to Article 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (stating that everybody has the right to leave his or her own country and to come back), and to Article 14 (referring to the right to

⁴⁴ Choucha Protest vor EU-Delegation' March 19, 2014 on <http://ffm-online.org/2014/03/19/tunis-choucha-protest-vor-eu-delegation/>. *Tunis Centre for Migration and Asylum (Centre de Tunis pour la Migration et l'Asile, CeTuMa)*, a new NGO attached to the academic sphere aims to enhance public and scientific discussion about a new immigration policy in Tunisia.

⁴⁵ Al-Achni, D. (Regional Public Information Officer) for the UNHCR in Tunisia quoted in 'Choucha Refugee Camp to Close, Leaving Hundreds of Residents in Limbo' at TunisiaLive, June 28, 2013 on <http://www.tunisia-live.net/2013/06/28/choucha-refugee-camp-to-close-leaving-hundreds-of-residents-in-limbo/>.

⁴⁶ For example *Afrique-Europe-Interact*, *Boats for People*, *Welcome to Europe*, *borderline Europe* and *Forschungstelle für Flucht und Migration (FFM)*. For current events, such as the day of transnational protest in Tunisia in September 2013 or the protest in front of the conference of the ministries of interior in Germany in December 2013, follow <http://chouchaprotest.noblogs.org/> and www.afrique-europe-interact.net.

⁴⁷ See <http://blechvisa.blogspot.de/>.

stay there under good social conditions). The association *Article 13* connects migration issues to the fight for social rights, fair development and good working conditions. In a broader perspective, the initiative criticizes the world's unequal living conditions, which result from the global economic system and the restrictions of the global migration regime. In a practical sense, it seeks to fight against the European border regime from the Southern side of the Mediterranean and therefore demands reciprocity of visa requirements between all countries. As a first step, it has initiated protest against the visa fees required by European states. It has started information campaigns to educate the Tunisian population about the visa regime widely perceived as 'normal', though it is the result of a political decision from the 1990s. Meanwhile, *Article 13* is also fighting for the rights of people who pass through Tunisia on their way to Europe. In this context, they also try to put pressure on the Tunisian government to respect and to recognise the international conventions for the protection of human rights and freedom of movement.

Focused on these thematic axes and born out of a context of transnational engagement during the preparation of the WSF 2013, the political activism of *Article 13* is largely motivated by the wish to demonstrate that all people – whether migrants, potential migrants or non-migrants – from the Southern side of the Mediterranean are 'not only victims' but that they will also fight for their rights – to move but also to stay. In this context, their genuine concern seems to be the question of how to connect wide spread, mostly European dominated 'No border'-struggles with the Tunisian context where migration also means danger, loss and grief for many families concerned.

Conclusion

In conclusion, while emigration is socially and culturally present in almost every Tunisian family, the issue is only now being politicized within Tunisian society. After the revolts of 2011, young Tunisians have not only opted for 'voice' – meaning protest – or 'exit' – meaning emigration – but have also started to politicize and mobilize around migration issues. Therefore, today we can speak not only of a reconfiguration of Tunisian migration politics 'from above' – meaning the reorganization of official state policies on both sides of the Mediterranean in reaction to the 'Arab Spring' – but also 'from below' – meaning the increasing influence of independent civil society actors in this field. Only three years after the revolts in Tunisia new movements in more or less institutionalized forms have emerged on the Tunisian political landscape that address migration issues from an independent, self-confident and critical perspective, claiming rights instead of asking for help. Whether focusing on the rights of those who have already emigrated and are now missing (AFVIC), those who immigrated to Tunisia and left without an adequate framework of asylum (the *Choucha protest*) or those thinking about emigration in the future (*Article 13*), their protest not only addresses the Tunisian authorities but also directly the Italian government, the EU and the UNHCR, who are seen as responsible for the current situation in Tunisia. Furthermore, not only the direction of their protest is transnational but also their cooperation. The young movements are not only well connected within Tunisia and regularly join each other's protests, they are also closely linked with existing movements from different countries and continents in the transnational struggle for the freedom of movement. In this respect, the WSF 2013 in Tunisia, as a global meeting and exchange about struggles around migration issues, provided an important first opportunity to share and discuss particular Tunisian perspectives within a transnational forum. At the same time, however, it indicated the ambivalence between the

emerging transnational solidarity on the one side and the reproduction of global power relations even within these struggles through its forms and goals of political organization on the other – a process that demands further observation, (self-)reflection and analysis

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Migration and Youth - A Moroccan Perspective

Bachir Hamdouch

Introduction: The Evolution and Importance of International Migration for Morocco

Migration is specific to youth as few elderly people emigrate. The Moroccan population living abroad is estimated at 4.5 million people, of which 85% are living in Europe. It represents about 13% of Morocco's population (34 million).¹ More importantly, more than two thirds of Moroccan households are directly affected by international migration, with at least one of their members living abroad or having returned from living abroad. Throughout the country, all walks of life, men and women, all levels of education are affected.

Until the early 1970s, most of the emigrants came from two poor rural areas, Souss - Massa -Draa (South West) and East Rif (North East). Emigrants from the former went predominantly to France and Wallonia in Belgium, while those from the latter to Flanders, the Netherlands and Germany, mostly within the framework of bilateral labor agreements. It was almost exclusively young men, illiterate or with a rudimentary education.

This migration has evolved considerably since the mid-1970s, when Europe severely restricted the entry of workers from the South. Three notable changes occurred: the number of Moroccans living abroad (MLA) has tripled; migration has become 'feminized' and became balanced in terms of gender; and migration patterns have radically changed, from a temporary and circular migration, to permanent migration.²

Remittances reached their peak in 2007 and at 9% of GDP represented the most important source of foreign currency in the country. They have since declined – due to the global economic crisis and tighter immigration controls in Europe – in both absolute and relative terms, representing only 7% of GDP in the period 2008-2014. They are now the second most important source of foreign currency, after tourism but before foreign direct investment.

All this raises the question of the future role of international migration in Morocco, particularly for young people who are the main source of emigrants. What are the recent trends in international migration in Morocco, the changing profile of emigrants, the propensity to emigrate and return? What perspectives (conclusions?) can be drawn? These are the questions to which we (I?) will try to provide answers in this paper.

Recent Trends in International Migration in Morocco

Three important recent trends are emerging: The first trend is less emigration over the past six years, particularly in Europe, due to the global economic crisis affecting most countries of the European Union. According to official statistics registered with the consulates of Morocco, the annual growth rate of MLA³ has been less than 2% since 2008, whereas it was almost 5% in the 1990s and 2000s and

¹ Haut Commissariat au Plan (2012).

² Hamdouch B. & Al. (2000), Hamdouch B. (ed.) (2008).

³ These statistics underestimate the number of MLA, because they record only those who want to register with consulates and who need their services, whether regular or irregular.

over 10% in both the 1970s and 1980s.⁴ So, there has been a progressive reduction in the rate of emigration.

The second trend is more returns of MLA from Europe due to the economic crisis, and from the United States because of the changed social climate post-9/11, but also because of the greater resilience of the Moroccan economy and the improvement of the socio-political context in Morocco. No longer is it only retirees who return to the country, but also recent graduates and other highly skilled young people who have been working in well-paid jobs (finance, management and marketing, new technologies); retired MLA have been returning to Morocco less since the second half of 1970.⁵

Young people returning are often sent by multinational companies for whom they have worked abroad in order to establish or strengthen subsidiaries in Morocco, or they are attracted by high government positions, or opportunities for promising career in major Moroccan public or private companies, or finally by creating their own businesses.⁶

The third trend concerns immigration to Morocco by Europeans, Sub-Saharan Africans, Arabs and those from other continents. Sub-Saharan Africans are now less likely to be in transit to Europe, which is almost inaccessible, and more likely to be migrating to Morocco. It is the same with European and Arab citizens – especially since the "Arab Spring" – and nationals of countries in Asia, particularly those from China.

A new Moroccan immigration policy is being developed and implemented to take the new reality of immigration in Morocco into account.⁷

The Evolution of Moroccan Emigrants' Profiles

Migrants are generally young; the proportion of women has sharply increased; they are more educated and skilled, and finally their destinations are more diversified, although Europe remains predominant.

Young Emigrants

Investigations in Morocco since the 1970s show the continuity of the predominance of young people among the emigrants. The average age at the time of emigration abroad has changed little, ranging between 24 and 25 years since the 1960s. Only in the second half of the 1970s did it fall to 22 years due to the importance of family reunification which followed the cessation of labor migration from the South and change migration model, the transition from a largely circular migration to permanent migration.⁸ Another survey conducted in 2005 indicates that the average age of Moroccans living in Europe was 23 years old at the time of their departure from Morocco. Young people aged 20 to 29 years account for 61% of emigrants; those from 15 to 19 years 15%, and those aged 30 to 39 years 13%.⁹

⁴ ETF/AMERM (Nov. 2012).

⁵ Hamdouch B. (2006 a).

⁶ Hamdouch B. (2006 b), Haut Commissariat au Plan (2006), Association Maroc Entrepreneurs (2007).

⁷ Hamdouch B. (October 2013).

⁸ Hamdouch B. et al (2000).

⁹ Hamdouch B. (ed.) (2008).

Increase of Female Emigration

After the emigration of women within the framework of family reunification, their independent migration is becoming increasingly important. Currently, the Moroccan population living abroad is more balanced in terms of gender: 58% men and 42% women, while in the 1960s and 1970s, the Moroccan population abroad was composed almost exclusively of men. The male / female ratio is more balanced in the old immigration countries (France, Belgium, Netherlands, Germany) than in the new ones (Italy and Spain).

Increase of Educated and Skilled Profiles

The educational level of emigrants has risen sharply over the past four decades, taking advantage of advances in education in Morocco. The proportion of those without education decreased from 40% in 1960 to 11.5% in 2000 and those who have secondary and higher levels, increased respectively from 26.7% and 2.5%, to 51% and 16%.

Table 1: Evolution of Education Level of Emigrants by Migration Schedule (%)

Period of emigration	Without education	Primary education	Secondary education	Tertiary education	Total
Before 1960	82,8	10,7	6,5	0,0	100
1960-1969	40,0	30,7	26,7	2,5	100
1970-1974	39,4	34,8	25,8	0,0	100
1975-1979	39,5	46,2	13,6	0,7	100
1980-1989	19,0	26,9	41,8	13,3	100
1990-1994	7,9	26,7	50,3	15,2	100
1995-1999	9,6	23,0	50,3	17,1	100
2000-...	11,5	21,3	51,1	16,1	100
Total	21,4	28,4	39,8	10,4	100

Source: Hamdouch B. (ed.) (2008).

The observation of the level of qualification at the time of emigration, as indicated by the 1998 and 2005 surveys, reflects a net increase (see Table 2). The emigration of unskilled people significantly decreased from 41.8% to 24.1. In contrast, the migration of skilled workers has increased from 2.8% to 16.4%. The middle managers (technicians, foremen) fell from 2.7% to 1.6% and that of engineers remained almost stable, from 1.3% to 1.4%.

Table 2: Evolution of the degree of skills (1998, 2005)

Qualification level at the time of emigration	1998 Survey	2005 Survey
Without qualification	41,8	24,1
Low skilled worker	35,5	10,7
Skilled worker	2,8	16,4
Technician	2,1	1,3
Foreman	0,6	0,3
Engineer	1,3	1,4
Other	15,9	45,7

Source: Hamdouch B. et al (2000), Hamdouch B. (ed.)(2008).

More Diversified Destinations

There has been a double diversification over the past few decades: Firstly in Europe, from traditional reception countries (France, Belgium, Netherlands, Germany) to new ones (Spain, Italy, UK, Scandinavia...). Secondly, to countries in other continents: North America (Canada and United States), Gulf Arab countries... Other ancient destinations, such as Sub-Saharan Africa, are maintained, and still others, Maghreb countries, varied according to the political uncertainties including the "Arab Spring."

Propensity to Emigrate

Levels of youth emigration from Morocco are not very different from those of other countries. A survey was conducted in 2011 by Fondapol in 25 countries. The sample is one thousand young people aged 16-29 years in each of the selected countries. It appears that the propensity to migrate is 29% in Morocco, barely higher than in Russia (28%) or Mexico (27%), but lower than in South Africa and Estonia (31%), and even lower than in Greece (35%) and Romania (41%).¹⁰ The ETF survey, conducted in Morocco in 2012, gives more details.¹¹ Interviewees are between 18 and 50 years old. It distinguishes between the people based on their emigration potential (41.8 %): those with a low propensity to emigrate – those who express a wish or desire to emigrate (28.5%) – and those with a high propensity – those who have begun to prepare – who make up only half the amount of those with a low propensity (13.3%).

- The same survey shows the profile of potential migrants:
- They are young: 50% are 18-29 and 30% are 30-39 years old.
- There are more men than women (60%/ 40%).

¹⁰ Le Matin du Sahara (4 March 2011).

¹¹ Project ETF/AMERM (November 2012).

- They are single: men / women (62 %/49 %).
- They are more educated, but this is a contributing factor, not a determining one.

Usually, they are not unemployed. Unemployment is a factor encouraging emigration, though it is not criteria. Although there is a positive correlation between unemployment and the propensity to emigrate, only 21% of those who want to emigrate are unemployed compared to 45% of those who work. Thus the purpose of the migration is more to improve income levels and standard of living rather than simply to find a job. This finding is confirmed by previous investigations on the employment situation of emigrants just before departure. However, the same surveys show that the proportion of unemployed increased among the emigrants in recent decades, due to the degradation of the employment situation, particularly for young people, with the arrival of wave of new entrants into the labor market.¹²

Conclusion and Outlook

International migration is important to Morocco. It primarily concerns young people. However, it has undergone significant changes in recent decades as a result of many factors, including contrasting economic fortunes in Morocco, in other countries of the Mediterranean and in Sub-Saharan Africa as well as in Europe. The socio-political and demographic circumstances in all of these countries, as well as their respective migration policies have also played a considerable role.

The profile of Moroccan emigrants has evolved. If they are still mostly young, they are more educated and skilled, the proportion of women has increased, with almost as many women emigrating as men, and finally, their destinations are more diversified, although the predominance of Europe remains. Recent trends from the current global economic crisis indicate less emigration from Morocco, more returns and more immigration, in particular of Sub-Saharan Africans and Europeans to Morocco. The propensity of Moroccan youth to emigrate is the same as that of many other countries; it is even lower than that of similar countries. Prospects after the economic crisis are uncertain and depend on the demographic and socio-economic developments in the regions South, East and North of Morocco as well as in Morocco itself, and last but not least on cyclical surges and public policies of both sides of the Mediterranean Sea.

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Youth Unemployment in the Southern Mediterranean: Demographic Pressure, Human Development and Policies

Wai Mun Hong

Introduction

(Un)employment can be considered a common measure of socio-economic well-being; it is a term that describes economically active persons who find themselves jobless. For many unemployed citizens, hopelessness sets in as the period of job search drags on, undoubtedly causing serious psychological impact and provoking dissatisfaction with those in power - a dissatisfaction that often manifests itself through protests. Unsurprisingly, unemployment became a heated topic during the social uprisings that erupted in the Southern Mediterranean region.¹

Unemployment rates in the Southern Mediterranean during the period preceding the 2010-2011 social uprisings were in fact improving, but in many countries, rates still remained in the double digits. Job creation had been growing faster than the labour force, but the impact was hardly felt. Youth bore most of the brunt, becoming more vulnerable to unemployment with respect to other working age segments of the population. Job searching was indeed increasingly daunting as an average of more than half of the youth in the Southern Mediterranean felt that it was not a good time to find a job.²

Many observers in the region highlight the importance of demographics since the Southern Mediterranean youthful population continued to put pressure on the job market capacity with more new entrants for every retired person from the labour force. This was changing in the last decade as the year-on-year growth of the labour force, including the youth workforce, began to decrease in some of the Southern Mediterranean economies. But demographic pressure was not the only aspect influencing the Southern Mediterranean's chronic unemployment problem; it was the interaction between demographic factors and out-dated equity-oriented socio-economic policies that in fact produced a long-term impact on the (youth) (un)employment situation. Southern Mediterranean economies focused on public investments in education as part of their post-colonial policies, with the objective of modernising the state by consolidating power and strengthening capacity building and legitimacy. It was not until the 1970s that the impact of this on (un)employment started to become visible. Public sector contraction only served to exacerbate the situation. Even today, the people of the Southern Mediterranean continue to feel the side-effects of these policies as highly educated persons find themselves facing increasing difficulties when entering the job market.

With this context in mind, this paper explores the intricacies of the (un)employment landscape in the Southern Mediterranean region. Statistical analysis will be used to observe the impact of demographics and human development dynamics on unemployment, illustrating how post-colonial policies still play a role in this issue. The analysis includes an intra-regional comparison element due to the diversity of the region. The objective is to identify nuanced differences between the economies in the Southern Mediterranean region with regard to (un)employment in order to explain

¹ The Southern Mediterranean economies refer to Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Syria and Tunisia.

² Silatech and Gallup, Inc., The Silatech Index, Series: Mindset Score, Year: 2010. Southern Mediterranean economies included in the study are Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Syria and Tunisia.

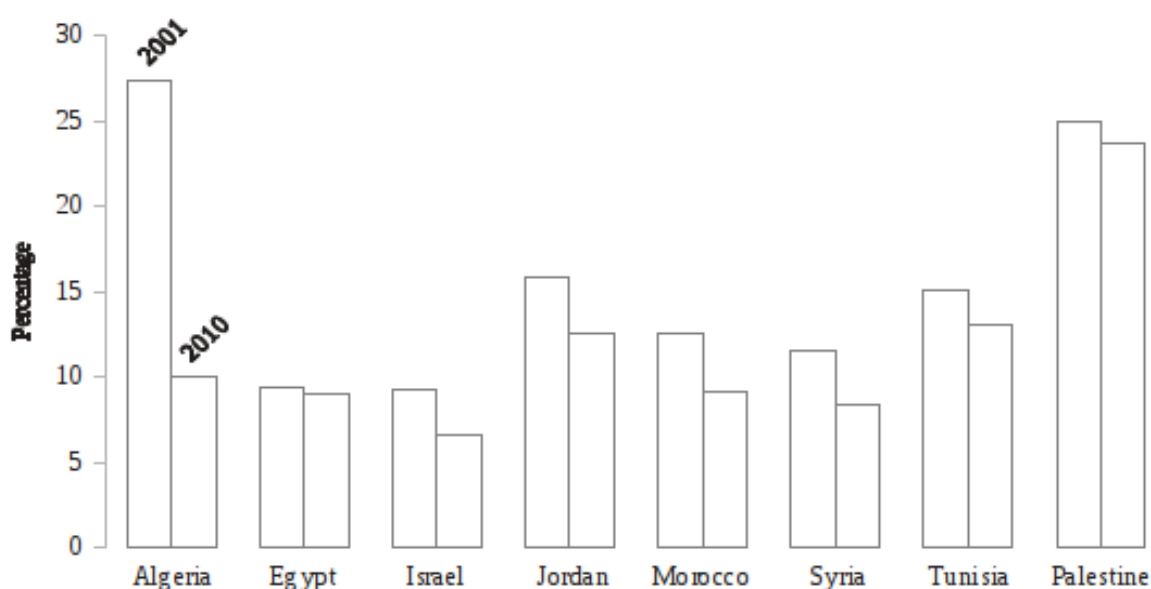
why some countries experienced social uprisings and socio-political change while others did not. Furthermore, this paper also analysis the role that youth played in the social unrests across the region, suggesting that young demographics and youth unemployment have been the main factors contributing to the social chaos. After all, the youth segment constitutes an important part of the social fabric, and is often considered “the future of the country”.

In the first section, the paper presents an overview of the unemployment situation in the Southern Mediterranean with a statistical analysis of the labour and job markets. The second section focuses on youth unemployment, and the third on their participation in the labour and job markets. The fourth section assesses the impact and the intricacy of demographic trends on (youth) unemployment in the Southern Mediterranean based on data from various international organisations. The fifth section assesses the human development aspect of the (youth) labour force, and explains how this affected (un)employment. Recognising the shortcomings of statistical analysis as a method for capturing the intricacies of the unemployment landscape, the sixth section discusses some explanations that go beyond recent argumentative narratives.

Unemployment in the Southern Mediterranean

By 2010, unemployment rates in the Southern Mediterranean had reached one of its lowest points in the decade, with a combined rate of 10 percent³. At the state level, rates varied between 24 percent in Palestine and 7 percent in Israel. Regional unemployment also decreased by 5 percent between 2001 and 2010⁴, although at state level, progress was disparate. Algeria's unemployment situation saw the greatest improvement, with its total unemployment rate falling by 17 percentage points, while Egypt experienced the slowest improvement, with total unemployment rates falling by only 0.40 percentage point. (See graph 1.1)

Graph 1.1. Total unemployment rate, 2001 and 2010, percentage



³ Author's own calculations, The World Bank's Development Indicators, Series: Labor force, total; Unemployment, total (% of total labor force), Year: 2010. Data for Lebanon and Libya not available.

⁴ Ibid.

Source: The World Bank, World Development Indicators & Global Development Finance, Series: Unemployment, total (% of total labor force), Year: 2001 and 2010. Note: Data for Lebanon and Libya not available.

However, despite their improving employment situation, Southern Mediterranean economies did not succeed in overcoming their chronic unemployment rates. In Algeria, despite a decrease of near 20 percentage points, the unemployment rate remained at double-digits. In Tunisia, unemployment rates not only stayed above 10 percent - the region's second highest -, but also had one of the slowest improvements. Similar developments could be found in Jordan, Syria and Egypt.

Table 1.1. Labour force and job market trends

	Between 2001 and 2010			
	Total n°. of new jobs created	Growth in n°. of new jobs created, %	N°. of new labour force entrants	Labour force growth, %
Algeria	3,681,274	53.78	2,280,441	24.22
Egypt	5,527,938	30.34	5,986,273	29.77
Israel	686,206	30.06	661,949	26.30
Jordan	363,704	34.71	368,733	29.63
Lebanon*	121,626	10.76	148,494	12.10
Morocco	1,567,295	18.09	1,353,745	13.67
Syria	977,659	22.30	894,057	18.03
Tunisia	567,826	20.57	574,193	17.66
Palestine	224,432	48.49	284,451	46.15
Southern Mediterranean**	13,596,335	30.44	12,403,840	23.84

Source: Author's own calculations and The World Bank's Development Indicators, Series: Labor force, total; Unemployment, total (% of total labor force), Year: 2001 and 2010.⁵ Notes: * Between 2004 and 2007. ** Excludes Lebanon and Libya.

What is intriguing about this development is that the region's average of near 5 percent economic growth⁶ per annum (p.a.) in the past decade had little trickle-down affect on job creation. In 2010, the Southern Mediterranean labour force was approximately 64 million strong.⁷ It grew by 24 percent from 2001, an equivalent of 12.4 million new labour force entrants (see Table 1.1.). The region had generally succeeded in stabilising its unemployment rate by stimulating a job creation growth of 30 percent, just enough to absorb the number of new labour force entrants. Although the number of jobs created was proportionally growing at a rate faster than that of the labour force, it did not improve the unemployment situation significantly.

⁵ (a) Due to incomplete and disparate data for calculation purposes, the difference in the number of employed persons between 2001 and 2010 as a proxy of the number of new jobs created. The logic being that all employed persons must have a job, and therefore difference in the number of employed persons between two-time period is the number of "new" jobs created, positive or negative.
 (b) Number of new labor force entrants is the difference in the total labor force between 2001 and 2010.

⁶ Economic growth here refers to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth. Growth rate is based on author's own calculations, The World Bank's World Development Indicators, Series: GDP growth (annual %), Year: 2001 to 2010. Data for Palestine not available.

⁷ Author's own calculations and The World Bank's World Development Indicators, Series: Labor force, total; Unemployment, total (% of total labor force), Year: 2001 and 2010. Due to incomparability in the latter comparative analysis, this figure excludes Lebanon and Libya. With Lebanon and Libya, the size of the labour force was 68 million.

At the state level, Algeria outperformed other economies in the Southern Mediterranean region. Its growth in terms of new jobs created exceeded the growth of the labour force by 30 percent, explaining the steep drop in unemployment rates. Other Southern Mediterranean economies maintained a gap between 1 and 5 percent, but also experienced faster job creation over labour force growth. These developments produced mixed effects on unemployment situations across the Southern Mediterranean. Algeria benefited the most by far, with approximately 1.4 million of jobs created in excess of the number required to cover the number of new labour force entrants as well as a substantial portion of the existing pool of unemployed.

Morocco, Syria and Israel also experienced similar developments, albeit to a lesser extent. In the rest of the region, despite similar trends in the growth differential between job creation and the labour force, different unemployment dynamics were produced. In Egypt, the number of new jobs created was 458,334 short of the number of new labour force entrants. This number was 60,019 in Palestine, 6,366 in Tunisia, and 5,029 in Jordan.

On the regional level, the number of new jobs created outstripped the number of new labour force entrants by approximately 1.2 million. However, the spill-over of new jobs created in excess only marginally decreased overall unemployment rate by 5 percent; unemployment rates thus remained at a double-digit 10 percent. Indeed, Southern Mediterranean economies were successful in stabilising the unemployment rate in the past decade, but the situation remained unchanged for so long that the economies were not only at risk of decreasing productivity and efficiency, but also prolonging social discontentment on the ground. Although unemployment rates were somewhat stabilised, the real number of unemployed people was still growing. It can be concluded that the stabilisation of unemployment rates is no longer a sustainable strategy in the Southern Mediterranean. As the 2010-2011 social uprisings and the continued social discontent in the region demonstrate, greater socio-economic progress is needed in order to prevent further social chaos. It is not enough to create new jobs as a way to absorb the bulge of new labour force entrants. The number of new jobs created must grow at a rate far higher than the stabilising rate in order to bring it significantly down, and closer to the potential natural unemployment rate of the economy in order to ensure at least the minimum level of productivity and efficiency.

Youth Unemployment in the Southern Mediterranean

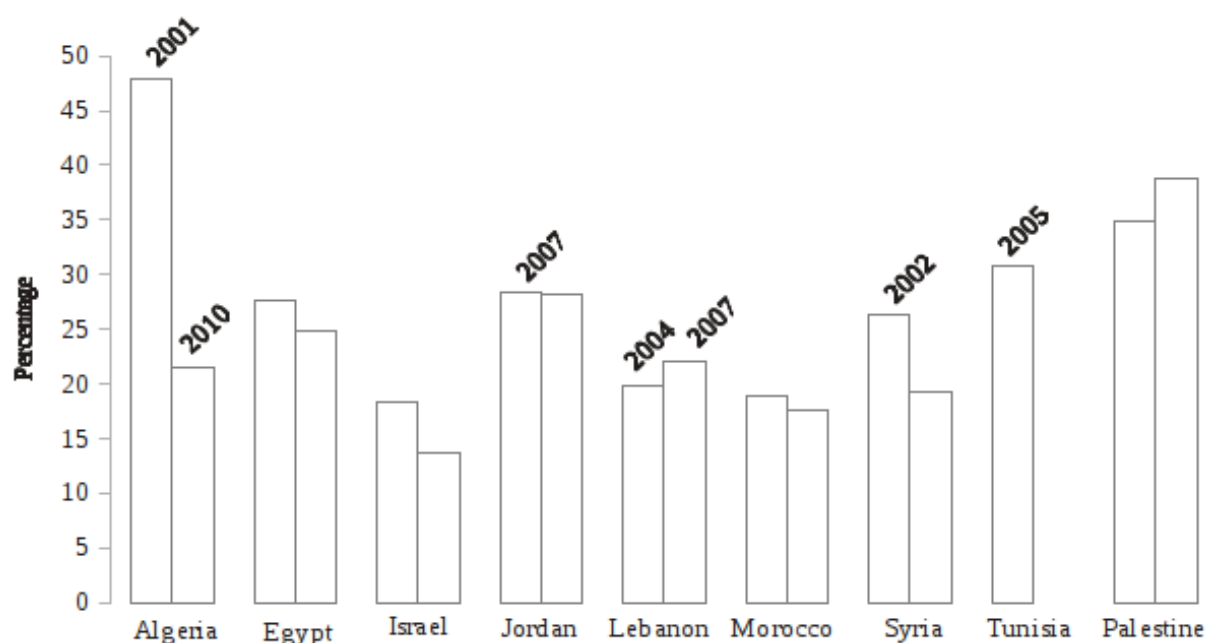
The unemployment landscape in Southern Mediterranean was bleak for the population at large, but the situation was (and still is) even more daunting for the young generation⁸. On the eve of the social uprisings, youth unemployment rates were above 20 percent, which was double the total unemployment rate; these rates were, and still are, among the world's highest. Some of the highest youth unemployment rates in the region were found in Egypt and Tunisia, where the social uprisings ignited. In fact, youth unemployment rates in the region had fallen to around 8 percent since 2001, with some economies improving faster than the others.

Showing the greatest improvement among the Southern Mediterranean economies, Algeria's youth unemployment rate decreased from nearly 50 percent in 2001, the region's highest rate at the time,

⁸ According to The World Bank, the youth population comprises any person aged between 15 and 24. Youth labour force refers to the population aged between 15 and 24 who are economically active.

to 21.5 percent a decade later. Meanwhile, the youth unemployment rate in Egypt, which in 2001 stood at 27.7%, fell only by 2.9 percentage points in the same decade, remaining the third highest in 2010. The situation in Tunisia was also one of the most serious in the region by the eve of its social uprising in 2010. (See graph 2.1)

Graph 2.1. Youth unemployment



Source: The World Bank, World Development Indicators & Global Development Finance, Series: Unemployment, youth total (% of total labor force ages 15-24), Year: 2001 and 2010 unless specified otherwise. Note: Data for Libya and Tunisia of 2010 not available.

The high youth unemployment rates in the Southern Mediterranean region meant that almost 50 percent of the total number of unemployed persons were youth (2.3 million in 2010). This was most visible in Syria and Egypt, where social unrests are still on-going, since more than 50 percent of the total unemployed population in these countries were young people. Tunisia was not far behind with 46 percent. Jordan also had similarly high proportions of unemployed youth, but managed to narrowly escape a similar predicament. Better performing economies had a smaller proportion of young people within their total unemployment rates (see Table 2.2).

A common feature of the Southern Mediterranean economies is the decreasing share of youth in total unemployment. Syria experienced a decline of 14.16 percentage points, the biggest decline in the region. Algeria was a close second, with a decrease of 10 percentage points. In Jordan, however, young people remained some of the most vulnerable to unemployment in the region, as the share in total unemployment remained extremely high - about 50 percent - and decreased by only 1 percent. Palestine was the exception, experiencing an increase in the share of youth in total unemployment. The falling share of youth in total unemployment in the Southern Mediterranean economies also corresponded to a 24.64% contraction of the pool of unemployed youths. Algeria experienced the largest contraction: the number of unemployed youth decreased by 64.02 percent. Still, this was not necessarily true for other Southern Mediterranean economies. Despite a fall in the proportion of

youth in the total unemployment, Egypt's pool of unemployed youths grew by 11 percent, Lebanon's by 8 percent and Jordan's by 2 percent.

In other words, from a regional perspective, unemployment in Southern Mediterranean had indeed made substantial progress in all elements that make up the youth (un)employment composition. However, this outcome was underpinned by diverse and unbalanced performances in each economy in the MENA region. Although an improving (youth) (un)employment rate is an over-arching indicator of better employment prospects, it does not reveal hidden flaws in the intricate composition of elements that result in (un)employment. This is evident in the case of Egypt, where the youth unemployment rate and the proportion of youth in total unemployment decreased, but the pool of unemployed youth continued to expand. This finding is by no means indicative, but it offers a potential explanation to the social chaos and the growing discontent among the unemployed, regardless of age.

However, the same assumption does not explain the case of Syria, for instance. Syria may not have been the best performer in the region, but it had a better general scorecard and less contradictions than Egypt. In Tunisia, comparable data of the two-time periods do not exist, but the central indication factor for the social unrest in 2010-2011 was the high (youth) unemployment rate.

Table 2.2. Youth unemployment trends and dynamics

	% of youth within total unemployment rate		Between 2001 and 2010	
	2001	2010	Expansion in n°. of unemployed youths	Growth in n°. of unemployed youths, %
Algeria	47.76	37.76	-786,004	-64.02
Egypt	61.40	55.01	131,387	11.32
Israel	28.11	24.08	-15,287	-23.24
Jordan	50.41 ('07)	49.37	1,721 ('07-10)	1.76 ('07-10)
Lebanon	47.92 ('04)	40.58 ('07)	3,783 (04-07)	8.14 ('04-07)
Morocco	38.24	37.18	-92,562	-19.55
Syria	69.94 ('02)	55.79	-137,203 ('02-10)	-33.34 ('02-10)
Tunisia	46.28 ('05)	-	-	-
Palestine	38.89	40.56	26,910	45.09
Southern Mediterranean*	49.08	45.34	-735,556	-24.62

Source: Author's own calculations, The World Bank's World Development Indicators, Series: Labor force, total; Unemployment, total (% of total labor force), Labor force participation rate, total (% of total population ages 15-24), Unemployment, youth total (% of total labor force ages 15-24), Year: 2001 and 2010 unless specified, and U.S. Census Bureau International Data, Series: Population by youth age group, Year: 2001 and 2010. Note: * includes Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Morocco and Palestine. (a) Year of the data in brackets when data of year 2001 and/or 2010 are not available. (b) Data for Libya not available.

Youth labour force and job market trends

As the youth become increasingly educated and well-informed, they start to represent an important part of the Southern Mediterranean socio-economic fabric and contribute to time-invariant socio-economic development. Yet, this young generation has been the one most affected by unemployment. Although the youth segment accounted for only one-fifth of total labour force in the Southern Mediterranean countries⁹ (approximately 13 million in size), they constituted a disproportionate 50 percent of the total number of unemployed persons. The core of the unemployment problem troubling many of the Southern Mediterranean economies today could be the result of these paradoxical intricacies at work.

Although many observers argue that demographic pressure has caused the unequal representation of youth in total unemployment in the Southern Mediterranean economies, the statistical analysis illustrated in Table 3.1. shows that the effect could be marginal. Between 2001 and 2010, youth labour force in the Southern Mediterranean region has only grown by 1 percent, or 140,805 persons. At the state level, instead of expansion, half of the Southern Mediterranean economies experienced a contraction in youth labour force, including Syria and Tunisia where social uprisings erupted. The most serious cases were found in Algeria where youth labour force suffered a -20 percent growth. Morocco's youth labour force experienced a -14 percent growth, Tunisia's -11 percent, Syria's -7 percent, and Lebanon's -2 percent (see Table 3.1.).

Table 3.1. Labour force trends and dynamics

	Growth between 2001 and 2010		
	Labour force	Youth labour force	Labour force aged 25-64
Algeria	24.22	-20.01	40.81
Egypt	29.77	24.34	31.20
Israel	26.30	3.10	30.15
Jordan	29.63	20.27	32.54
Lebanon	43.53	-2.00	56.39
Libya	25.83	8.85	30.93
Morocco	13.67	-13.61	22.90
Syria	18.03	-6.57	28.99
Tunisia	17.66	-11.03	25.71
Palestine	46.15	30.13	52.33
Southern Mediterranean	24.29	1.08	31.48

Source: Author's own calculations, The World Bank World Development Indicators & Global Development Finance, Series: Population, total, Labor force, total, Labor force participation rate for ages 15-24, total (%), Year: 2001 and 2010, U.S. Census Bureau International Data, Series: Population by youth age group, Year: 2001 and 2010.

⁹ See table 3.2.

Most of the Southern Mediterranean economies that experienced negative growth in their youth labour force also saw negative growth in the number of unemployed youths (except Lebanon).¹⁰ Egypt's high growth in youth labour force, which was also one of the highest in the region, could represent a causal factor in the increase of unemployed youth in the country (likewise for Jordan, although to a lesser extent).

Contractions in youth labour force in the Southern Mediterranean economies could potentially be the result of the decreasing youth labour force participation rate. Syria saw the greatest decrease in youth labour force participation rates with a decline of 11.70 percentage. Egypt and Libya were the only economies to experience an increase in youth labour force participation rates, which increased by 5.30 and 1.60 percentage points respectively. In Egypt, however, this rising youth labour force participation rate only further accentuated the high proportion of unemployed youth and the (youth) unemployment rate.

Although it remains unclear to what extent youth labour force growth in the Southern Mediterranean area affected (youth) unemployment on a regional level, the increase in youth labour force certainly provides explanations to some of the cases on a country-level, for example, in Egypt or Jordan, where growth in the youth labour force was extremely high. If marginal growth in youth labour force cannot provide explanation to the high (youth) unemployment rate in other cases in the Southern Mediterranean, (dis)equilibriums in the labour force may hold some justifications.

Table 3.2. Youth labour force and employment trends

	% of youth in the labour force		% of youth in total employed persons	
	2001	2010	2001	2010
Algeria	27.28	17.56	19.59	15.32
Egypt	20.83	19.96	16.63	16.50
Israel	14.21	11.60	12.78	10.72
Jordan	23.33 ('07)	21.96	19.25 ('07)	18.05
Lebanon	19.02 ('04)	16.52 ('07)	16.54 ('04)	14.15 ('07)
Libya	23.10	19.98	-	-
Morocco	25.29	19.22	23.44	17.42
Syria	31.12 ('02)	24.41	25.97 ('02)	21.53
Tunisia	19.38 ('05)	16.57	15.40 ('05)	
Palestine	27.83	24.78	24.16	19.87
Southern Mediterranean*	23.01	18.86	15.23	13.33

Source: Author's own calculations, The World Bank's World Development Indicators, Series: Labor force, total; Unemployment, total (% of total labor force), Labor force participation rate, total (% of total population ages 15-24), Unemployment, youth total (% of total labor force ages 15-24), Year: 2001 and 2010, and U.S. Census Bureau International Data, Series: Population by youth age group, Year: 2001 and 2010. Note: *includes Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Morocco and Palestine. (a) The year of the data is specified in brackets when data of year 2001 and/or 2010 are not available. Labour market in the Southern Mediterranean economies had indeed been all but balance. Although youth

¹⁰ See also Table 2.2.

accounted for approximately 20 percent of the total labour force, they also bore the most of the brunt of unemployment, representing 50 percent of the total unemployed persons. In a labour market in equilibrium, the percentage of youth in the labour market and in the total employment would have been similar or close. However, the gap between the proportion of youth in total unemployment and that of total labour force in the Southern Mediterranean countries only reveals the unbalances in the labour markets (see Table 3.2.).

In 2010, the gap between the percentage of youth in the labour market and the total employment in the Southern Mediterranean countries was 5.53 percent, which was in fact an improvement from 7.77 percent in 2001. Algeria and Syria experienced the greatest improvements with the gap reduced by 5.45 and 2.27 percent respectively, while in the rest of the MENA region, the gap reduced by less than 1 percentage. Despite the decreasing gaps, labour markets in Palestine, Lebanon and Egypt were still some of the most unbalanced in the MENA region.

One factor that contributed to the unbalanced youth labour markets in the Southern Mediterranean countries was the continued marginalisation faced by young people, even when the job markets were expanding. Out of 12 million newly created jobs¹¹, only 8.24 percent were occupied by youth (this corresponds to 963,040 jobs). The statistical analysis illustrated in Table 3.3. shows that those Southern Mediterranean economies with the greatest improvements in employment rates have some of the lowest proportion of new jobs for youth. In Algeria, for instance, despite the greatest improvement in the general (un)employment situation, only 7.39 percent of the total new jobs went to young people. In Morocco, one of the best performing economies in the MENA region, youth labour force was totally excluded from the new job creation efforts, and some young people even lost their jobs for the benefit of older labour force; these factors potentially explain the meagre fall of youth unemployment in Morocco (see Table 3.3.).

Table 3.3. Youth in the job market

	Between 2001 and 2010		% of new jobs created occupied by youth
	Total n°. of new jobs created	N° of new jobs created occupied by youth	
Algeria	3,681,274	271,963	7.39
Egypt	5,527,938	888,280	16.07
Israel	686,206	26,371	3.84
Jordan*	124,010	6,864	5.54
Lebanon**	121,626	-9,910	-8.15
Morocco	1,567,295	-248,339	-15.85
Syria***	921,541	1,207	0.13
Palestine	224,432	24,765	11.03
Southern Mediterranean****	11,687,146	963,040	8.24

Source: Author's own calculations, The World Bank's the World Bank's World Development Indicators, Series: Labor force, total; Unemployment, total (% of total labor force), Labor force participation rate, total (% of total population ages 15-24), Unemployment, youth

¹¹ Ibid. These 12 million newly created jobs exclude Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Syria and Tunisia. This figure is used instead of 13 million as shown in table 1.1., because the respective data on youth unemployment rate are not available, in order to establish a meaningful two-time period comparison between 2001 and 2010.

total (% of total labor force ages 15-24), Year: 2001 and 2010, and U.S. Census Bureau International Data, Series: Population by youth age group, Year: 2001 and 2010. Notes: * between 2007-2010. ** between 2004-2007. *** between 2002-2010. **** includes Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Morocco and Palestine only. (a) Data for Libya and Tunisia is not available. (b) The percentage of total new jobs created occupied by youths derived from the percentage of the difference between the number of employed youths in 2001 and 2010 over the total new jobs created (proxied by the difference in the number of employed persons between the same two-time periods).

means that proportionally, more youth in the labour force benefited from newly created jobs than any other economies of the MENA region. This has likely happened at the expense of the existing pool of unemployed persons since its youth unemployment rate fell faster than the unemployment rate for those aged between 25 and 64. This suggests that a significant proportion of Egyptians suffering from socio-economic discontent are aged 25-64, rather than belonging to the youth segment per se (between 15 and 24 years old according to the World Bank's definition). In Syria, where civil war continues, less than 1 percent of the newly created jobs were occupied by youth illustrating the extent to which Syrian youth continue to be marginalised in the job market.

Is the impact of demographic pressure over-estimated?

Demographics in the Southern Mediterranean region are indeed young, with the proportion of people aged between 0 and 14 representing approximately 30 percent of the population.¹² It is likely that demographic pressure will continue to stretch the job market's capacity to absorb the expanding labour force. However, this is only one possible explanatory factor; the share of the population aged between 0 and 14 is decreasing, which in turn, slows down youth population growth. In the decade between 2001 and 2010, youth population in Southern Mediterranean grew by 7.22 percent - vis-à-vis the total population of 18.81 percent -, while the population aged between 25 and 64 grew by 25.95 percent¹³ (see Table 4.1.).

On the country level, all countries except Palestine have a youth population growing slower than the working population (aged between 25 and 64), although differences vary between 3 and 27 percentage. Youth population grew in most of the Southern Mediterranean economies except in Tunisia, where a negative growth in youth population became visible, corresponding with the contraction of youth labour force in Tunisia. If youth population was growing slowly, this means that the demographic pressure would also be correspondingly reduced. Yet, a positive population growth rate will always signify an expansion. Rather than focusing on the demographic rates, it is therefore relevant to explore the nuances and numeral differences and compare their effects on those populations who experienced social uprisings and those who did not.

Salehi-Isfahani (2012) used the ratio of population aged between 20 and 24 in relation to those aged between 60 and 64 to estimate the number of new entrants for every retiring working person, or in other words, the entry-to-exit ratio. This means: the higher the ratio, the higher is the pressure on the job market's capacity to absorb the expanding labour force. Using this method, the highest entry-to-exit ratio are found in Palestine (6.54), Syria (6.13), and Libya (5.85). Indeed, Syria and Libya have experienced social uprisings; however, this method does not explain the cases of Egypt and Tunisia, where the entry-to-exit ratio are among the lowest in the MENA region: 3.44 and 3.05 respectively. Furthermore, despite their higher ratios, Algeria (4.22) and Morocco (4.02) hardly experienced any social unrests of the magnitude seen in Egypt and Tunisia.

¹² Author's own calculations, U.S. Census Bureau International Data, Series: Population by youth age group, Year: from 2001 to 2010.

¹³ See table 3.1.

Table 4.1. Demographic trends and dynamics

	Growth between 2001 and 2010		
	Total population	Youth population aged 15-24	Population aged 25-64
Algeria	15.68	2.76	27.26
Egypt	20.88	4.96	26.61
Israel	17.64	9.63	18.29
Jordan	33.67	27.81	30.55
Lebanon	8.16	1.33	16.28
Libya	18.97	4.20	31.82
Morocco	11.06	1.51	20.66
Syria	31.47	30.12	34.80
Tunisia	9.53	-3.75	20.47
Palestine	28.53	39.94	25.98
Southern Mediterranean	18.81	7.22	25.95

Source: Author's own calculations, U.S. Census Bureau International Data, Series: Population by five year age group, Year: 2001 and 2010.

As long as the (youth) population continues to grow, the Southern Mediterranean economies will continue to face demographic pressure on their labour and job markets. However, the impact of demographic pressure on (youth) unemployment in the Southern Mediterranean region has been over-estimated, since youth population and labour force growth have generally falling.

Human development in the Southern Mediterranean countries

Education is often perceived as playing a vital role in human development, and to this effect, people in the Southern Mediterranean countries are somewhat fortunate in comparison to global standards, as they receive free public education up to tertiary level. This means that Southern Mediterranean economies spend more on education in terms of percentages of government expenditure and of the GDP than other regions in the developing world with similar income levels (e.g. Southeast Asia). The average investment in education in the Southern Mediterranean region (percentage of the government expenditure) is in some cases higher than in parts of the European Union (EU), revealing the importance attributed to education in this area, and their equity-focussed socio-economic policies (see Table 5.1.)

Morocco made the highest investment on education than any other Southern Mediterranean economy by spending 26.21 percent of government expenditure. In second and third place are Tunisia and Algeria, who spent 20.68 and 20.27 percent in education respectively. Lebanon's investments on education (percentage of government expenditure) was the lowest, but this by no means suggests that education is less important here. Rather, this reflects changes that emerged as a result of the civil war in the 1970s, which considerably weakened the power and capacity of the state to control the education system (Buckner, 2011: 21). The size of the investment in education,

however, does not always produce the desired results; moreover the results of this investment are often difficult to measure and quantify. The most common tool for quantifying the impact of the expanding investment in education is the increasing school enrolment rate; this happened in the Southern Mediterranean economies (Salehi-Isfahani, 2012: 850). Indeed, the average gross enrolment rate for tertiary education was 36.71 percent in the Southern Mediterranean countries, which was higher than any developing regions of similar income level, but it lagged behind with regard to secondary education. (see Table 5.2.) However, what we cannot easily quantify is the impact of the enlarged and facilitated access to education on economic productivity, especially when a significant portion of highly educated persons are unemployed.

Table 5.1. Public investments in education (average between 2001 and 2010)

	% of government expenditure	% of GDP
Algeria	20.27	4.34
Egypt	14.04	4.31
Israel	13.50	6.24
Lebanon	9.88	2.36
Morocco	26.21	5.57
Syria	16.66	5.15
Tunisia	20.68	6.39
Southern Mediterranean*	17.32	4.91
Middle East & North Africa*	17.03	5.12
Southeast Asia*	16.82	3.27
East Asia*	15.93	3.95
Latin America & the Caribbean*	15.58	4.57
EU 28*	11.74	5.21

Source: Author's own calculations, World Bank's World Development Indicators, Series: Public spending on education, total (% of government expenditure), Public spending on education, total (% of GDP), Year: from 2001 to 2010. Note: * Regional average. (a) Data for Jordan, Libya and Palestine not available. (b) Middle East & North Africa refers to the 21 economies according World Bank's classification, which include all 10 Southern Mediterranean economies. (c) Southeast Asia refers to the 10 Association of Southeast Asia Nations economies. (d) East Asia refers to China (no data available), Hong Kong, Japan and Republic of Korea. refers to the 41 economies according World Bank's classification.

An alternative indication of non-monetary returns on investments in education is the quality of the education system. High education investment rates in the Southern Mediterranean countries did not automatically result in better educational systems. Here, the Southern Mediterranean countries lag behind Southeast Asian education systems, although their performance does remain slightly better than education systems in Latin America. In terms of performing quality, Tunisia has the best educational system in the Southern Mediterranean region, followed by Jordan and Israel, while those in Libya, Egypt and Algeria lag behind.

Today, the productivity and efficiency of an economic system is measured by the ubiquitous use of advanced technology, closely linked to mathematics and science, and technological development. In these terms, Southern Mediterranean economies lag behind, especially in comparison to Asian counter-parts (in terms of the quality of mathematics and science education), but perform better than their Latin American counter-parts. Within the Southern Mediterranean region, Tunisia and Jordan provide the highest quality of mathematics and science education (better than some Asian and European countries), while Egypt and Algeria have a lower quality of education in these fields. Trends in the International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) 2011 further revealed deficits in the quality of mathematic and science education in the Southern Mediterranean countries.¹⁴ On average, eighth grade students in the Southern Mediterranean countries scored approximately 10 percent lower than the global average in mathematics, and 9 percent lower in science (with the exception of Israel). Southern Mediterranean economies also had some of the lowest quality scores for management schools, performing worse than most of the developing regions of similar income level. Yet, this is where some of the Southern Mediterranean economies have achieved higher quality compared to other developing regions, and to some European countries. Tunisia stays ahead of the rest of the Southern Mediterranean economies in terms of the quality of management schools, followed by Morocco, Jordan and Israel.

Table 5.2. Performance on investments in education, 2009-2010

	Secondary education enrollment, gross %	Tertiary education enrollment, gross %	Quality of the educational system*	Quality of math and science education*	Quality of management schools*
Algeria	83.22	24.02	2.63	3.25	3.28
Egypt	87.77	34.75	2.58	2.70	3.33
Israel	91.51	60.41	3.08	3.19	4.10
Jordan	89.35	39.91	4.45	4.74	4.31
Libya	93.53	55.75	2.43	3.68	2.23
Morocco	55.85	11.31	2.86	3.69	4.32
Tunisia	88.04	30.81	4.89	5.53	5.00
Southern Mediterranean [^]	84.18	36.71	3.28	3.83	3.80
Middle East & North Africa [^]	90.09	30.91	3.80	4.17	4.11
Southeast Asia [^]	76.96	26.81	4.15	4.41	4.28
East Asia [^]	92.39	58.53	4.38	5.18	4.41
Latin America & the Caribbean [^]	84.14	34.64	3.17	3.20	4.16
EU 28 [^]	102.38	60.61	4.36	4.80	4.73

Source: Author's own calculations, World Economic Forum's Global Competitive Index, Series: Secondary education enrollment, gross %, Tertiary education enrollment, gross %, Quality of the educational system, Quality of math and science education, Quality of management schools, Year: 2009-2010. Note: * Score 1-7 (best). ^ Regional average. (a) Data for Lebanon, Syria and Palestine not available. (b) Middle East & North Africa refers to the 21 economies according The World Bank's classification, which include all 10 Southern Mediterranean

¹⁴ See Table A.1. in the Appendix.

economies. (c) Southeast Asia refers to the 10 Association of Southeast Asia Nations (ASEAN) economies. (d) East Asia refers to China (no data available), Hong Kong, Japan and Republic of Korea. (e) Latin America & the Caribbean refers to the 41 economies according to The World Bank's classification.

These results explain why skills mismatch remains one of the main concerns in the labour and job markets. In increasingly inter-dependent economic systems, most Southern Mediterranean economies have displayed little compatibility between the supply structure of their economies and the world demand, which makes them vulnerable to external competition and more likely to lose from economic globalisation than to benefit from it. The quality of the educational systems also causes lower productivity, making the region less competitive. The lower quality of educational systems can threaten the skills adequacy of the labour force. In the Executive Opinion Survey conducted by the World Economic Forum, in the compilation of the Global Competitiveness Index 2009-2010, an average of 9 percent of the respondents expressed that an inadequate educated workforce was one of the five most problematic areas when doing business in the Southern Mediterranean region (and more problematic than in economies in Southeast Asia and Latin America). This problem is evident in Syria, where 13.40 percent of the respondents indicated that skill inadequacy as one of the five most problematic areas, followed by Jordan (12 percent), and Egypt (10 percent). The rest of the Southern Mediterranean economies have lower positions than the average of other developing regions, with the exception of Israel and Libya, where skill inadequacy is less problematic.

Table 5.3. Percentage of tertiary graduates by programmes (average 1990-2012)

	Science	Engineering, manufacturing, construction	Humanities, arts	Social sciences, business, law	Health, welfare	Education	Agriculture	Services
Algeria	12.15	13.00	21.00	43.25	4.25	1.50	2.00	1.75
Israel	5.590	31.50	9.50	31.50	4.50	15.00	-	-
Jordan	14.50	9.00	14.50	28.25	9.25	16.25	2.50	-
Lebanon	10.25	12.25	14.33	45.08	11.42	4.25	0.33	1.83
Morocco	16.33	9.50	16.75	38.25	5.75	8.00	1.00	2.25
Tunisia	26.00	16.00	19.00	24.00	9.00	1.00	2.00	4.00
Palestine	11.09	7.18	13.55	32.36	8.55	25.73	0.36	0.55
Southern Mediterranean [^]	13.07	14.06	15.52	34.67	7.53	10.25	1.37	2.08
Middle East, North Africa [^]	12.08	14.19	15.91	33.23	7.61	11.73	1.65	2.36
Southeast Asia [^]	11.97	12.56	12.53	30.26	6.09	20.55	4.26	2.30
East Asia [^]	8.68	22.54	14.51	26.27	8.86	8.86	1.18	5.12
Latin America, the Caribbean [^]	6.96	11.31	3.67	37.25	12.75	21.30	2.65	3.48
EU 28 [^]	8.94	12.92	10.27	35.75	13.15	13.30	2.00	5.14

Source: Author's own calculations, UNESCO Institute for Statistics, Data Centre, Series: Distribution of tertiary graduates by programmes, Year: from 1990 to 2012. Notes: [^] Regional average. (a) Data for Egypt, Libya and Syria not available. (b) The sum of the percentages may not add up to 100 percent. (c) Middle East & North Africa refers to the 21 economies according The World Bank's classification, which include all 10 Southern Mediterranean economies. (d) Southeast Asia refers to the 10 Association of Southeast Asia Nations (ASEAN) economies. (e) East Asia refers to China (no data available), Hong Kong, Japan and Republic of Korea. (f) Latin America & the Caribbean refers to the 41 economies according The World Bank's classificatio

Even in those countries with a high quality of mathematics and science education, students are more likely to opt for humanities, arts and social sciences (HAS) in tertiary education in comparison to students in developed economies, with an even smaller number of students pursuing science, engineering, and technical studies (SET). The choice of subjects studied at tertiary education affects the ubiquitous use and development rates of advanced technologies. Although the region's average proportion of tertiary graduates in SET was comparable to that of developed East Asian and European economies, or even higher in some cases, the proportion of HAS graduates was not only higher than any other world region, but also approximately 23 percent higher than the proportion of SET graduates. The percentage difference between tertiary graduates of HAS and SET in the Southern Mediterranean countries is comparable to the one of the EU's and Latin American averages, but it was significantly dissimilar to (South) East Asian averages, where the quality in mathematics and science education is among the highest worldwide. The proportion of SET and HAS graduates was most balanced in Tunisia, where the proportion of graduates from each of the cohorts accounted for slightly more than 40 percent of the total number of graduates; here, the proportion of SET graduates is among the highest in the Southern Mediterranean region. Although the proportion of SET graduates is comparable to the MENA region's average, Algeria has far more HAS graduates (64 percent), and thus the most unbalanced graduate distribution in the MENA region, followed by Lebanon, Morocco and Palestine.

Despite generous expenditure on education, most Southern Mediterranean economies show shortcomings in socio-economic policies, as well as an inability or lack of political will of to generate socio-economic policies that promote structural reforms and respond to global demand and competition.

Conclusion

Unemployment and youth became heavily discussed topics in the discourses surrounding the 2010-2011 social uprisings across the Southern Mediterranean region, particularly since youth unemployment shot to above 20 percent in the region after the uprisings. The common phenomena we observe across the Southern Mediterranean economies are their overall improvements in terms of overall unemployment, while (youth) unemployment numbers remain problematic.

Youth represent 20 percent of the labour force in Southern Mediterranean, but 50 percent of the total unemployment, which signals the extent of the marginalisation facing young people in the labour market. The magnitude of this marginalisation varies between the economies in the MENA region, distinguishing those Southern Mediterranean economies that were affected by social unrests and those who were not. There are several ways to measure this magnitude, and to interpret its link to the social unrests in the affected economies. In Tunisia, 46 percent of unemployed persons were youth. In Egypt, and Jordan to a lesser extent, despite a falling share of youth in the total unemployment rates, the number of unemployed young people actually increased. In Syria, only less than 1 percent of the total newly created jobs over the past decade are occupied by youth. One root cause of youth marginalisation is the demographic pressure in the Southern Mediterranean countries thanks to their youthful population. But with plummeting (youth) population growth rates, and a contraction of the youth labour force, one can also maintain that the effects could have been smaller than expected, if not marginal. This is by no means to discount the role of demographic dynamics in shaping the labour force. However, demographic factors can only explain a certain part of the

unemployment problem. These subjects and factors interact and respond to policies with effects that are hard to measure or to quantify.

Youth unemployment in Southern Mediterranean countries was actually more influenced by the effects of post-colonial policies that mirrored state- and capacity-building efforts and legitimacy consolidation, having long-term impacts on people's attitudes. During the post-colonial period, many Southern Mediterranean states implemented free education up to higher education levels, with university graduates having guaranteed jobs in the public sector (Anderson, 1987 and Teixeira, 2009 cited in Buckner, 2011, p. 21). This aspect of the post-colonial period has remained until today, as education in most of the Southern Mediterranean states is still free up to the tertiary level; more and more people in the Southern Mediterranean region are literate and educated (Mahdi et al., 2013: 2), and many see education as an opportunity for social mobility (Cohen, 2004 cited in Buckner, 2011: 21). In today's context, where young people are becoming increasingly educated, those aged between 15 and 24 are more likely to stay in education longer. This development partly explains the decreasing youth labour force participation rate in the MENA region. If these findings were verified, such developments could challenge the youth definitions used by international organisations in the context of labour markets.

By the 1970s, the Southern Mediterranean governments found themselves racking up public budget deficits which eventually forced them to shift toward neoliberal reforms. Neoliberal reforms in the 1970s and 1980s led to high economic growth, but the effects on unemployment rates were marginal. The reforms benefited the resource rich economies, as oil exports expanded globally during the oil booms. The capital intensive oil industry is linked to low employment elasticity, and the economic growth had limited influence on employment expansion.

Southern Mediterranean economies lack a synergy between structural reforms and the transformation in the private sector. Governments were offering less public positions, but the private sector did not expand fast enough to absorb the affected persons. This reveals the state's lack of capacity to follow up with institutional reforms that truly promote liberalisation. Bureaucracy-oriented education systems became out-dated, and produced graduates with skills that did not match the requirements in the private sector. The governments' attempts to mitigate the impact of the market liberalisation on the affected persons with more equitable social benefits produced a zero-sum effect on the budget, but shaped people's attitudes, perceptions, and behaviour. In response to employment erosion, some people in the labour force choose to remain in school and to obtain a higher education qualification in order to increase their employability. Others choose to stay out of the labour market, because they can afford to do so (middle-income households). As the job search period protracts, the enthusiasm of young and first-time job seekers will dampen further by the day. The so-called "hittistes" - young people literally leaning against the wall on the streets, watching the days go by without doing anything, because they are jobless and hopeless - represent this phenomenon in the Southern Mediterranean countries.¹⁵ A negative growth in youth labour force due to lower youth participation in the labour market is not a real contraction; it is a procrastination of a social problem that is just waiting to erupt.

¹⁵ "Hittistes" is a Franco-Arab slang.

This attitude is also linked to the socio-economic equity focused policies of many Southern Mediterranean states through rent transfers and distributions in the form of social benefits to contain the spread of discontent caused by the dismal job market. Many Southern Mediterranean states do not have comprehensive social security programmes, but their public social security expenditure (in percentages of the GDP) is higher than most middle-income economies, implying that social benefits in the region are likely to be more generous.¹⁶ Generous social benefits become a source of moral hazard among unemployed persons when they start to depend on pay-outs to survive, and at the same time they deter from productive economic participation, cultivating a culture of “waiting” until they land on a government job. This development is also a by-product of the Southern Mediterranean states' earlier policies during the post-colonial period when the public sector expanded and not only provided higher wages, but also more social security compared to the private sector. Despite contraction in the public labour sector over the past three decades of neoliberal reforms, these expectations have not disappeared. Instead, job seekers are willing to wait until they get a job in the public sector. A survey conducted by Silatech, in collaboration with Gallup Inc., shows that more than 50 percent of the youth interviewed (aged between 15 and 29) still expressed preference to work for the government, despite their grim opinion of the job market (except in Libya).¹⁷

In the Southern Mediterranean, the youth expectation that better job prospects can be reached through education are fruitless. Highly educated youth are finding themselves under attack from all fronts for being young and highly educated. Those who fall through the crack resort to informal jobs, where working conditions are often sub-standard, and the workers' social welfare is unprotected, or they decide to emigrate. Either way, for the state, this means a loss of taxes that could otherwise be added to public expenditure. On the other hand, the governments' inability to reform and transform their economies is not a question of political will alone. External competition has weakened the Southern Mediterranean domestic economic capacities to the extent that they are not benefiting much from globalisation, neither individually nor as an economy. Last but not least, Southern Mediterranean economies lack the regional integration and cooperation required to develop a supply-chain network, to support their market liberalisation programmes, and to proceed to real economic transformation.

¹⁶ See table A.2 in the Appendix.

¹⁷ See footnote 2.

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Appendix

Table A.1. Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study 2011 Scores (Eighth Grade)

	Mathematics	Science
Algeria [^]	387	408
Egypt [^]	405	417
Israel [*]	516	516
Jordan [*]	406	449
Lebanon [*]	449	406
Morocco [*]	371	376
Syria [*]	380	426
Tunisia [*]	425	439
Palestine [*]	404	
Southern Mediterranean ^{**^^}	422	435
Southeast Asia ^{**}	466	468
East Asia ^{**}	595	554
EU 28 ^{**}	497	517

Global**	467	478
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Source: Author's own elaboration and calculations, Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study 2011 Scores, last accessed 28 January 2014 at <http://timssandpirls.bc.edu/data-release-2011/pdf/Overview-TIMSS-and-PIRLS-2011-Achievement.pdf>, Salehi-Isfahani et al. (2011) as illustrated in Salehi-Isfahani (2012), pp. 855. Notes: * Scores from Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study 2011 Scores. ^ 2007 scores from Salehi-Isfahani et al. (2011) as illustrated in Salehi-Isfahani (2012), pp. 855. ** Average. ^^ Includes Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Tunisia and Palestine. (a) Data for Libya not available. (b) Southeast Asia refers to the 10 Association of Southeast Asia Nations (ASEAN) economies. Southeast Asia average scores excluding Singapore were 418 for mathematics and science 428. (d) East Asia refers to China (no data available), Hong Kong, Japan and Republic of Korea.

Table A.2. Public social security expenditure (percentage of the GDP)

	2010	Latest data available
Egypt	8.96	14.07
Israel	17.21	16.54
Jordan	12.53	12.56
Lebanon		5.28
Morocco	4.43	
Syria	3.22	
Tunisia	8.73	9.82
Southern Mediterranean*	9.18	11.65
Middle East & North Africa*	8.35	11.04
ASEAN*	2.35	3.16
East Asia*	8.34	10.18
Latin America & the Caribbean*	7.91	7.58

Source: International Labor Organization's World Social Security Report, 2010-2011, Table 25. Note: * Regional average. (a) Data for Algeria, Libya and Palestine not available. (b) Middle East & North Africa refers to the 21 economies according The World Bank's classification, which include all 10 Southern Mediterranean economies. (c) Southeast Asia refers to the 10 Association of Southeast Asia Nations (ASEAN) economies. (d) East Asia refers to China, Hong Kong, Japan and Republic of Korea. (e) Latin America & the Caribbean refers to the 41 economies according The World Bank's classification.

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